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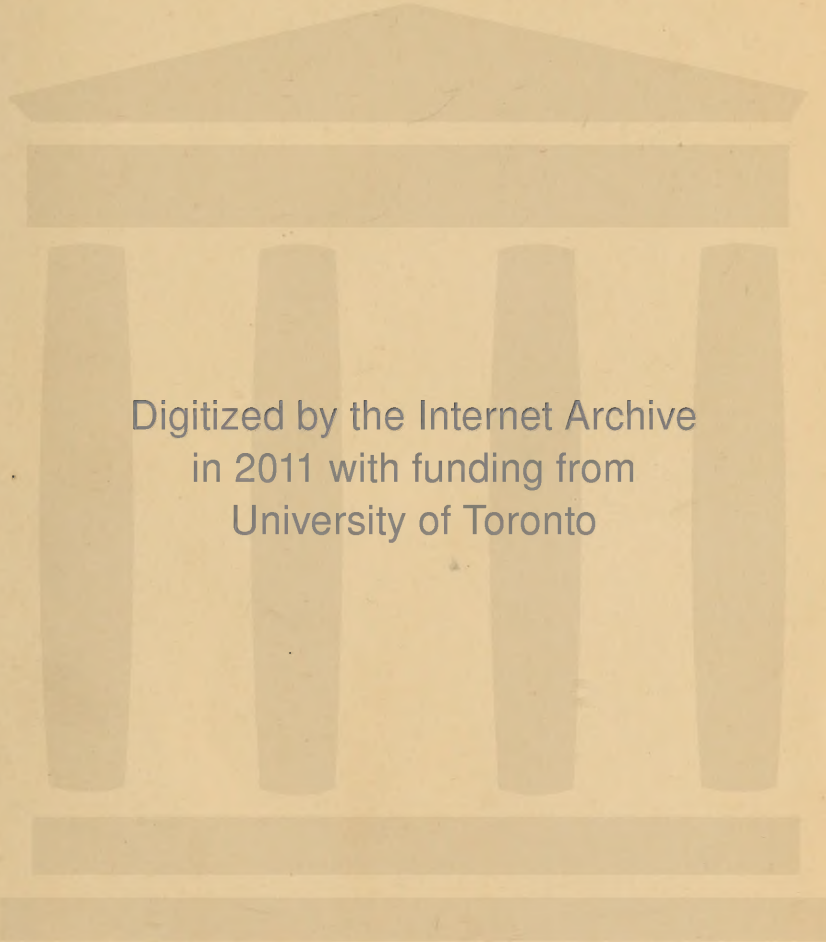
Dear Sir,

Sept 26 1879









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J. Brown, sculp.

Your affectionate and  
trusting friend  
W. H. Landon

1852

Walter Savage Landon, Esq. T. L.

Engraved by Powell, RA.

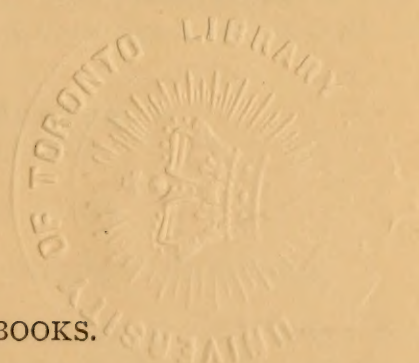


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# WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

*A BIOGRAPHY.*

By JOHN FORSTER.



IN EIGHT BOOKS.

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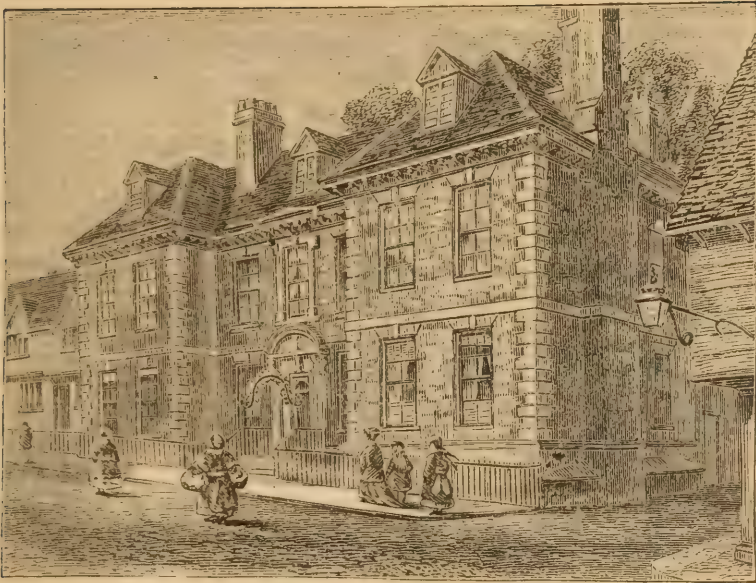
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*Note.*—All the letters quoted in this book are from original sources, and, with a few exceptions specially stated, have not before been printed.





BOOKS I.-IV.



LANDOR'S BIRTHPLACE AT WARWICK.

1775-1821..

CERTAIN references that occur in this volume might be misleading without a mention of the fact that the commencement of it was written in the winter of 1865, and that the English Edition of the first four books was printed off in the summer of 1867. The completion of the book has been necessarily delayed until now.

# WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

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## BOOK FIRST.

1775-1797. ÆT. 1-22.

### WARWICK, RUGBY, OXFORD, AND SWANSEA.

I. Introductory. — II. The Landors and the Savages. — III. Birth and Childish Days. — IV. At Rugby School. — V. At Ashbourne. — VI. At Trinity College, Oxford. — VII. Before and after Rustication. — VIII. First published Book. — IX. A fair Intercessor. — X. A Moral Epistle. — XI. Retreat to Wales.

#### I. INTRODUCTORY.

I AM not insensible to what is generally taken to be expressed, in matters of literature as in many other things, by great popularity. The writer whom crowds of readers wait upon has deserved his following, be it for good or ill; and the desire to read without the trouble of thinking, which railways have largely encouraged, and to which many modern reputations are due, has not prevented the growth of other reputations that will outlive the contemporaries who conferred them.

But with this popular literature, which in some form always exists, changing its form with the age, there has existed at all times a literature less immediately attractive, but safer from caprice or vicissitude; and finding its audiences, fit however few, the same through many ages. England has been very fortunate in it. Its principal masters have been the men who from time to time have purified, enlarged, and refixed the language; who have gathered to it new possessions, extending its power and variety; but whose relation for the most part to their reading contemporaries, far from that of the petted or popular favorite, has been rather that of the thoughtful to the little thinking or the learned to the little knowing. They have been too wise for the foolish, and too difficult for the idle. They have left unsatisfied the eager wish for the sensational or merely pleasurable, on whose gratification popularity so much depends; and they have never had for their audiences those multitudes of readers who cannot wait to consider and enjoy. Taking rank with this rare class is the writer, WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, of whom I am about to give some account.



descendant from the same family, the Countess of Conyngham. This estate was called Hughenden Manor, and is now the property of Mr. Disraeli.

Well born as Walter Savage Landor thus was, on the side of both parents, no title can yet be established for such claim to high consideration or remote antiquity, on the part of either, as from time to time has been put forth in biographical notices of him, and even in his own writings. For here the reflection has to be made, — strange in its application to such a man, — that, possessing few equals in those intellectual qualities which he was also not indisposed to estimate highly enough, he was not less eager to claim a position where many thousands of his contemporaries equalled and many hundreds surpassed him. I had on one occasion the greatest difficulty in restraining him from sending a challenge to Lord John Russell for some fancied slight to the memory of Sir Arnold Savage, Speaker of Henry the Seventh's first House of Commons; yet any connection beyond the name could not with safety have been assumed. When he says, in one of his *Imaginary Conversations*, that his estates were sufficient for the legal qualification of three Roman knights, he is probably not far from the truth; but it is much more doubtful whether any one of his forefathers of either family possessed in land an income equal to his own before it was squandered by him. Between the two classes of the untitled gentry of England, his family, by both father and mother, held a place of which any man might have been proud; but it was not exactly all he claimed for it. To the rank of those powerful commoners of a former age who were not less than the noblest either in name or influence, it did not belong; but it ranked with the highest and oldest among that class of private gentlemen who stood between these and the yeomanry, — men of small but independent fortunes, equally respectable, and educated not less well; and, during several generations, the property of both Landors and Savages had thus been held and handed down by their eldest children. There is pleasant allusion to these matters, and to his brother's occasional weakness respecting them, in one of Mr. Robert Landor's letters.

"It seems that the family was seven hundred years old, and several notices of my brother's death repeat the same tale. We may go back about half-way,\* but no further. Some of us enjoyed provincial

\* The reference here is to the Savages; the Landors, as will be seen towards the close of the letter, being more certainly of older date. Family deeds in Mr. Henry Landor's possession, witnessed by Robert de la Lande and Peter de Bracebridge, must have dated before the statute of *Quia Emptores* (1268); and Mr. W. H. Bracebridge, writing to Mr. Henry Landor seven years ago, throws some light on the claim to a more remote antiquity. "In Dansey's *Lives of the Crusaders*' (p. 60) I find our names again together, viz. that of 'Robert de la Lande, of that family which held manors in Warwickshire,' and of 'Peter de Bracebridge, (who) took upon him the sign of the cross, — of a family of this name of consideration in Warwickshire.' This was in 1191. It is also stated by Dansey that at the siege of Acre (when an assault was made on that town), the English and Germans attached ladders to the walls; whereupon the Pagans tied cords to them, and tried to drag them over the walls; whereon Ralph Telli, Hum-

honors and offices ; and Walter believed that a certain Arnold Savage was the Speaker of the House of Commons of that name. One of my churchwardens had a sister with whom I searched the parish registers for certain ancestors of hers. Finding only parish officers, not one of whom rose higher than a yeoman, the lady, who was indeed very handsome, assured me that they were descended from Julius Caesar quite directly ; and was much pleased on learning from me that this Julius was descended from Iulus, the son of Æneas, the son of Venus ; and thus I could account for beauty in herself, both divine and imperishable. She was forty ; and I gained the character, soon lost again, of extreme politeness. I related this anecdote to my brother, who could not apply it. In a translation of Rabelais published about fourteen years ago, I found the word *Lambor* \* applied to such fools as were supreme among all other fools ; and a long note was required to enumerate their varieties. Till then I did not believe that any language could contain so many opprobrious terms, so whimsical and contemptuous. The last time that my brother was at Birlingham I tried to read the long list of them, but was interrupted by such loud screams as must sometimes have shaken both your library and mine. There was not only astonishment, but delight, in his laughter. When I suggested that probably our ancestor was the greatest fool among all those who accompanied the Conqueror, and thus acquired the highest place and name, he accepted the priority. But then he might have reserved for himself the power to escape. For it appears that our name originally was Del-a-La'nd (De la Laundes) ; and my brother Henry has in his keeping some old writings conveying an estate signed and sealed in that name. When it was that so many Norman names gained English terminations, as must have been the case, the heralds know best."

### III. BIRTH AND CHILDISH DAYS.

The family identity of fools and Landors does not seem long to have survived the laughter of Rabelais. Some of the name did good service in the civil wars of Charles and Cromwell ; and Staffordshire had a stout Whig Landor for its high-sheriff in the reign of William the Deliverer, whose grandson, falling off from that allegiance, stood up as stoutly for the Jacobites, and whose great-grandson was the leading physician in Warwick, when, on the 30th January, 1775, in the best house of the town, facing to the street, but overshadowed at the back by old chestnuts and elms, the eldest child of himself and Elizabeth Savage of Tachbrooke, christened Walter and Savage, was born. The other children of the marriage may at once be named.

phrey de Pell, and *Robert de la Lande* and Roger Glanville mounted the ladder and put out the Greek fire which had been thrown on it, but Telli, mounting higher, cut the ropes with his sword" (p. 122).

\* The word "*lambor*," the reader need hardly be told, is not a fantastic name, but the old French word for a heavy fellow.



They were Charles, Henry, and Robert ; Elizabeth, Mary Anne, and Ellen : born respectively in 1777, 1780, and 1781 ; in 1776, 1778, and 1783. The three daughters died unmarried ; Charles and Robert entered the Church, after taking their degrees at Oxford ; and Henry, who had been at Rugby with Walter and Charles, and desired to have gone like them to Oxford, had, upon his brother Robert obtaining a scholarship to that university from Bromsgrove School, to yield to his father's doubt whether his income could properly support all three sons at college, and himself to enter the office of a London conveyancer.

It was the elder brother's misfortune in his youthful days that he alone should have wanted the healthful restraints which the others underwent of necessity. No care with a view to a profession had any need to find a place in his thoughts. He stood first in the entail of the family estates ; and if he could confine his desires within such limit, and live meanwhile on his father's allowance, he had simply to qualify himself for improving or wasting them. This he too well knew ; and though his father, as he observed in Walter the development of unusual intellectual promise, would eagerly have imposed upon him corresponding duties and obligations, the attempt only led to disagreements, and the unsettled wayward habit was never afterwards reclaimed.

Landor once proposed to send me reminiscences of his life. He had been reading the delightful fragment of the days of Southey's boyhood, and the fancy struck him to write from time to time some such recollections of his own. But he went no further than his sixth year, finding the difficulties beyond that date to be insuperable ; and unfortunately his letters were so carefully, for better preservation, slipped into some book at the time, that they are not now to be discovered. It was in vain I urged him to continue what he had been eager to begin. He had satisfied himself of the propriety of abstaining. He had found that though in boyhood we stand alone, we are afterwards double in more and better than the Platonic sense, and that no instrument is fine enough for the amputation. I pressed him no further.

There remains no remembrance of Landor's infancy or childhood, therefore, beyond such expressions as he now and then himself let drop in old age. Writing in 1853 from the house in which he was born, and which his sister Elizabeth occupied till her death in the following year, when the last witness of his childish days passed away, he mentions having picked up from the gravel-walk the first two mulberries that had fallen,—a thing he remembered to have done just seventy-five years before. Tachbrooke alternated with Warwick in these child-memories. From his seventh year he had associations with the Tachbrooke garden ; and when near his eightieth year he directed the now owner of the house, his brother Henry, to the exact spot where he would find the particular apple-tree of one of their boyish adventures, "close upon the nut-walk, and just of the same



size and appearance as it was seventy years ago." To this old place he was indeed especially attached, and his allusions to it were incessant. It was the scene of his earliest games and sports, where his "heedless childhood played, a stranger then to pain"; where his boyhood too soon had run through its few happy days; and where often he wished that he might find his final rest. These are the expressions continually applied to it in letters to members of his family, while his memory still could go back even beyond his seventh year. To his brother Henry in 1852 he exclaimed: "Dear old Tachbrooke! It is the only locality for which I feel any affection. Well do I remember it from my third or fourth year; and the red filberts at the top of the garden, and the apricots from the barn-wall, and Aunt Nancy cracking the stones for me. If I should ever eat apricots with you again, I shall not now cry for the kernel."

As soon as he could quit the nursery, he had been sent to a school at Knowle, ten miles from Warwick; and even of this time, when he had reached the age of about four years and a half, his letters have a recollection which is worth preserving. Writing to his sister Ellen from Florence, at the close of 1831, he says: "I remember when I went to Knowle an old woman coming from Balsal-Temple to little Treherne for a guinea, which he paid her yearly. She was one hundred and two when I was four and a half; so that it is in the range of possibility that she might have seen people who had seen not only Milton, but Shakespeare, Bacon, Spenser, and Raleigh. I myself have conversed with a man, not remarkably old, who had conversed with Pope, Warburton, and Fielding."\*

\* Other portions of this letter are so curious that the reader will thank me for preserving them. Adverting to an old Warwick friend's death, he continues: "She must have died extremely old: she was old forty years ago. I have an acquaintance here, an American by birth, formerly a painter, who remembers the election of Pope Ganganelli. He was in America when General Wolfe was killed, — '*but a mere child, as you may suppose,*' says he. He is now a hundred and thirteen or fourteen, and will not own that he is above eighty-nine, until reminded of Wolfe and Ganganelli. On this occasion, some years ago, he said, 'Yes, sir, I am eighty-nine; I was eighty-nine at the time you mention; and eighty-nine I will stick at, to the last.' He painted the picture of the late Lord Middleton and his family, about sixty years ago, at Middleton; soon after which he declined the profession because he found himself growing old. Fifty-five years ago he walked with a stick, — since that time he has left it off. He keeps late hours, and is not very abstemious in food or wine. A little while ago, somebody had read in the papers of a man in Russia who was a hundred and thirty-two years old. When this was told him, he said: 'I dare say that he is more, but won't own it: people when they are *getting a little in years* don't like to say anything about it.' His hearing is perfect. I asked him one day, in joke, how he liked William Penn. He did not perceive that I was quizzing him, although he is very suspicious, but answered gravely: 'Penn, *I believe*, was dead before my time, — at all events his estate was a good way from Philadelphia.' 'Then you never even saw him.' 'No, no, not I.'" Continuing what is said in the text of the man who had conversed with Pope, and who will shortly again be mentioned, Landor adds: "This was Dr. Harrington of Bath, who at the time I mention was not above seventy-two years old. He told me that he dined with old Allen at Prior Park when he was about ten or eleven years old, and saw there Pope and Warburton; and several years afterwards (five or six) Fielding. Pope died the year afterwards, that is, in 1745. But old James Smith, my American, might have had gray hairs in his head at Pope's death." I do not know what Lord Macaulay would have said to all this; but he might probably, and rightly, have demurred at the outset, — that the evidence did not satisfy him. It is curious, however.

Another incident, of a year and a half's later date, he recalled when writing to Southey, in 1811, of his Lanthony estate, in the Vale of Ewias, and its infinite variety of flowers, — those “beautiful and peaceful tribes” he so often wished that he knew more about. “They always meet one in the same place, at the same season; and years have no more effect on their placid countenances than on so many of the most favored gods. I remember a little privet which I planted when I was about six years old, and which I considered the next of kin to me after my mother and elder sister. Whenever I returned from school or college, — for the attachment was not stifled in that sink, — I felt something like uneasiness till I had seen and measured it. There is no small delight in having a friend in the world to whom one dare repeat such folly.” With a delight that may perhaps be measured by the surpassing beauty of the lines in which it is expressed, he repeated the folly in later years to a wider audience: —

“And ’t is and ever was my wish and way  
To let all flowers live freely, and all die,  
Whene’er their Genius bids their souls depart,  
Among their kindred in their native place.  
I never pluck the rose; the violet’s head  
Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank  
And not reproached me: the ever-sacred cup  
Of the pure lily hath between my hands  
Felt safe, unsoiled, nor lost one grain of gold.”

Varied, at the same time, with these enjoyments of youth, were its other commoner occurrences, which bring to most of us a foretaste of the later troubles. All the trials he ever underwent, he declared repeatedly, were as nothing to his sufferings over grammar and arithmetic, of the last of which he remained ignorant all his life, “according to the process in use.” And a still worse calamity, a deep lower than the lowest, was dancing; so that when he came to have a son of his own present age, he had gloomily to prophesy that he bid fair to be a worse dancer than he had himself been, for quite vainly had he striven to impress upon him the dreadful truth that all other miseries and misfortunes of life put together were nothing to this.

#### IV. AT RUGBY SCHOOL.

From Knowle, when about ten years old, Landor was transferred to Rugby; at that time under Doctor James, a scholar of fair repute, who did something to redeem the school from the effects of the long and dull mastership that preceded his. Many stories are told of Landor here, and some that in his old age obtained sanction from himself, which must, nevertheless, be pronounced apocryphal.

He is said to have been without a rival in boxing, in leaping, and in all sports allowed or forbidden; to have been the boldest rider and most adventurous despiser of school-bounds of whom the Rug-



bacons of that day boasted ; and to have astonished equally the townspeople, the school-boys, and the masters by a reckless defiance of authority. That he defied authority, here as in most other places, is certain enough ; but the methods and modes described are not those he is likely to have used. The picture of him on horseback, out of bounds, galloping beyond the reach of pedestrian authority, bears small resemblance to the studious, wilful boy, at once shy and impetuous, — not, indeed, backward in the ordinary sports of the school, but in boxing not more than the equal of any of his three brothers, of whom none were in a remarkable degree pugnacious or skilful, and in riding certainly inferior to them all. Charles more especially, the brother next to himself, was his admitted superior in athletic exercises ; and Rugby recollections have doubtless given to Walter many of the exploits of this younger brother, always more active and fonder of country sports, and to whom the language quoted would be more applicable, though still extravagant. Charles had a larger and finer presence, both as boy and man, and to the last was an admirable horseman. Walter was of strong build, but never, in early or later life, rode well ; and though he took part in cricket,\* football, and other games, and was even famous for the skill with which he threw the cast-net in fishing, he was at all times disposed rather to walk by the river-side with a book than to engage in such trials of strength and activity. In one of his letters he remarks both of school and college days, that he oftener stuck in the middle of a Greek verse than of a brake ; and he writes on one occasion to Southey, much in the style of an inexperienced horseman : “ I was very fond of riding when I was young, but I found that it produces a rapidity in the creation of thought which makes us forget what we are doing.” His brother Robert tells me that he never followed the hounds at Rugby or anywhere else, and that when he kept three horses he never mounted one of them ; they were only for his carriage. Average sized as he was, he was the least, though not the weakest, of the four brothers ; well shaped, but not in youth so good-looking as those who knew him only in after days would imagine.

For a moment I recall the well-remembered figure and face, as they first became known to me nearly thirty years ago. Landor was then upwards of sixty, and looked that age to the full. He was not above the middle stature, but had a stout, stalwart presence, walked without a stoop, and in his general aspect, particularly the

\* Other allusions to Rugby may be worth giving from one of his letters to his sister Elizabeth from Florence in January, 1831. Mentioning the fact of the publication of Dr. Buckland's book on Geology, he describes having dined with the Doctor three years before at Lord Dillon's, and adds : “ He told me I little suspected, when I was playing at cricket at Rugby, that I was running over some hundreds of hyenas. Several parishes in that neighborhood are resting entirely on immense droves of these brutes. He says they must have occupied the world before men did, yet the marks of their teeth are still visible on the thigh-bones one of another. I have been reading a book which I was laughed at for reading when at Rugby, and which I believe I then threw aside, *Sandford and Merton*. I find it one of the most sensible books that ever was written for the education of children.”



set and carriage of his head, was decidedly of what is called a distinguished bearing. His hair was already silvered gray, and had retired far upward from his forehead, which, wide and full but retreating, could never in the earlier time have been seen to such advantage. What at first was noticeable, however, in the broad white massive head, were the full, yet strangely lifted eyebrows; and they were not immediately attractive. They might have meant only pride or self-will in its most arrogant form but for what was visible in the rest of the face. In the large gray eyes there was a depth of composed expression that even startled by its contrast to the eager restlessness looking out from the surface of them; and in the same variety and quickness of transition the mouth was extremely striking. The lips that seemed compressed with unalterable will would in a moment relax to a softness more than feminine; and a sweeter smile it was impossible to conceive. What was best in his character, whether for strength or gentleness, had left its traces here. It was altogether a face on which power was visibly impressed, but without the resolution and purpose that generally accompany it; and one could well imagine that while yet in extreme youth, and before life had written its ineffaceable record, the individual features might have had as little promise as they seem to bear in a portrait\* of him now before me belonging to his brother Henry, and taken in his thirtieth year. The eye is fine; but black hair covers all the forehead, and you recognize the face of the later time quite without its fulness, power, and animation. The stubbornness is there, without the softness; the self-will untamed by any experience; plenty of energy, but a want of emotion. The nose was never particularly good; and the lifted brow, flatness of cheek and jaw, wide upper lip, retreating mouth and chin, and heavy neck, peculiarities necessarily prominent in youth, in age contributed only to a certain lion look he liked to be reminded of, and would confirm with a loud, long laugh hardly less than leonine. Higher and higher went peal after peal, in continuous and increasing volleys, until regions of sound were reached very far beyond ordinary human lungs.†

\* There is an engraving of this portrait of him in his thirtieth year, and another of a painting of him by Boxall on the eve of his seventy-eighth birthday. With Boxall's work he was greatly pleased, and wished it to appear in any posthumous edition of his writings. "I care little," he wrote to me in December, 1852, "how many folks look at me when it is clear and evident that I do not step out to be looked at. If I have any vanity or affectation, let me at least have the merit of concealing it. No author, living or dead, ever kept himself so deeply in the shade throughout every season of life. Perhaps when I am in the grave, curiosity may be excited to know what kind of countenance that creature had who imitated nobody, and whom nobody imitated; the man who walked through the crowd of poets and prose-men and never was touched by any one's skirts; who walked up to the ancients and talked with them familiarly, but never took a sup of wine or a crust of bread in their houses. If this should happen, and it probably will within your lifetime, then let the good people see the old man's head by Boxall."

† There is so good a description of this laugh in a clever article of the *London Quarterly Review*, shortly after Landor's death, that the reader will thank me for

With this accompaniment I have heard him relate one Rugby anecdote that is certainly authentic. Throwing his net one morning in a stream to which access on some previous occasion had been refused to him, the farmer who owned the land came down upon him suddenly; very angry words were exchanged; and Landor, complying quite unexpectedly with a peremptory demand for his fishing apparatus, flung the net over the farmer's head with such faultless precision as completely to entangle in its meshes his enraged adversary, and reduce him to easy submission. Nor did he less riotously laugh at the relation of one of his many differences with the head-master in his later years at the school, when he would entangle him as suddenly in questions of longs and shorts; and the Doctor, going afterwards good-naturedly to visit him in his private room, would knock vainly for admission at the bolted study-door, from within which Landor, affecting to discredit the reality of the visit or the voice, and claiming there his right to protest against all intrusion of the profane, would devoutly ejaculate, *Avaunt, Satan!*

Among his school-fellows was Butler, afterwards head-master of Shrewsbury and Bishop of Lichfield; but Landor had the reputation in the school of being the best classic. The excellence of his Latin verses was a tradition at Rugby for half a century after he left; and one of the fags of his time, a peer's son, has described the respectful awe with which he read one day on the slate, in the handwriting of Doctor James himself, "Play-day for Landor's Latin verses." His familiarity with Greek was less conspicuous, that language having become his more especial study only in later years; and there is doubtless some truth in the playful allusion of one of his letters written when he was eighty-four. "I have forgotten my Greek, of which I had formerly as much as boys of fifteen have now. Butler, afterwards Bishop of Lichfield, and myself, were the first at Rugby, or, I believe, any other school, who attempted a Greek verse. Latin I still possess a small store of." \* But what would seem most to have marked itself out as peculiar in his mastery of both Greek and Latin, even so early as his Rugby days, was less what masters could teach him than what Nature herself had given him. This was a character and habit of mind resembling closely that of the ancient writers; ways of seeing and thinking nearly akin to theirs; the power, sudden as thought itself, of giving visual shape to objects of thought; and with all this, intense energy of feeling, and a restless activity of

quoting it. The writer is speaking of Landor's morning calls in Bath, with his small Pomeranian dog, as events to the friends he visited. "He used to enounce the most *outré* opinions; and when some sentiment more extravagant than the rest had excited the laughter of his audience, he would sit silent until they had finished laughing, then he would begin to shake, then to laugh aloud, *piano* at first, but with *crescendo* steadily advancing to the loudest *fortissimo*; whereupon Pomero would spring out from his lair, leap into his master's lap, add his bark to Landor's roar, until the mingled volume of sounds would swell from the room into the sleepy streets, and astonish, if not scandalize, the somewhat torpid Bathonians who might be passing by."

\* Letter to Lady Sawle, 8th February, 1858.



imagination, eager to reproduce themselves in similar forms of vivid and picturesque expression. It was this that gave originality to his style, even while he most appeared to be modelling himself upon antiquity. He had the Greek love of the clear, serene, and graceful, of the orderly and symmetrical; he had the Greek preference for impulsive rather than reflective forms of imagination; and he had the sense of material grandeur, and the eager sympathy with domestic as well as public life, peculiar to the Latin genius. In this way to the last he was more himself of the antique Roman or Greek than of a critical student of either tongue; although the marvellous facility with which he had been writing Latin verse from his youth gave him always a power over that language which might well supply the place of more severe requirements of scholarship. Very largely also during all his life had the power contributed to his own enjoyment; and it is in this view, rather than in the light of tasks or lessons, we have to speak of his classical attainments even so far back as his boyhood. Such acquaintance with parsing, syntax, and prosody as the Rugby exercises at that time called for, cost him, of course, no effort; and long before he had formally qualified for the rank he was practically the first Latinist in the school. His tutor was Doctor Sleath, the late prebend of St. Paul's;\* but though this good man had some influence over him, it was exerted in vain to induce him to compete for a prize poem. "I never would contend at school," he wrote in one of his last letters to Southey, "with any one for anything. I formed the same resolution when I went to college, and I have kept it." With something of the shyness that avoided competition, there was more of the pride that would acknowledge no competitor; and he was, in truth, never well disposed to anything systematized either in pursuits or studies. What he did best and worst, he did in his earliest as his latest life for the satisfaction of his own will or pleasure.

The subject thus adverted to will frequently recur, and frank confession of my want of qualification to speak of it critically must accompany all remarks of my own. I will yet venture to say of his Latin verse, which he wrote as abundantly as English and of which he had himself the higher opinion, that I believe more of the pleasure of original poetry to be derivable from it than from any other modern Latinity; and though here and there it seems to me to be somewhat difficult in construction, it has never anything of the schoolmaster's expletives or phrases, but in that as in other respects may be read as if a Roman himself had written it. Nor is it less certainly to be said of his Greek, that, though he more rarely composed in that language, he had the sense inseparable from a poet and

\* Among his papers I found interesting proof that age had not obscured his recollection of kindnesses received at Rugby, in the copy of a note he had sent with his *Collected Works* in 1846 to his old tutor. "My dear Dr. Sleath: Do not fatigue your eyes with reading the small print I send you; but accept it graciously from your ever obliged and affectionate W. LANDOR."



scholar of the vast superiority of its literature, and derived from it an influence that in his own original writing became strikingly visible. He is one of the dozen men in a generation who can be said to have read Plato through in his own tongue; and when he had passed his eighty-fifth year he read in the original Greek the whole of the *Odyssey*. I will add a remark from one of his brother's letters: "At school and college he had gained superiority over his companions, and, seventy years ago, very little Greek was sufficient for such distinction. There are better scholars passing from our public schools now than were then the fellows of my college who had taken their master's degree. But Walter increased his Latin all his life long, because he had pleasure in it. He had also a fondness for the derivation of words: reading the Port-Royal Grammar twice through, and Ainsworth's Latin Dictionary once.\* But it was not till after he had left England and was preparing to qualify himself for the *Imaginary Conversations* and *Pericles and Aspasia*, that he applied his thoughts thoroughly to Greek literature; and even then his reading was very confined. His friends must regret his estimate of Plato especially. But there was no deception, no false pretence, in his criticisms. He did not affect more scholarship than he possessed: but because his contemporaries had once been inferior to him, he believed that they must ever remain at the same distance from him; that they must be inferior still; and hence the appearance of too much pretension. Compared with such scholars as the Universities are producing now, he was a very idle student, idle indeed. You will accept these opinions of mine as worth hardly a moment's consideration, unless they are confirmed by your own; for I am now, and ever have been, as ill qualified to estimate Walter as he was to estimate Plato. Parr once described him to me as a most excellent Latin scholar with some creditable knowledge of Greek; and I believe that not much more could be said fifty years later. Nor did he pretend to more."

Of any taste as yet developed in him for particular branches of English reading or study, there is no trace; but one of his letters to Southey in 1811 tells us of his first literary purchase: "The two first books I ever bought were at the stall of an old woman at Rugby. They happened to be Baker's *Chronicle* and Drayton's *Polyolbion*. I was very fond of both because they were bought by me. They were my own; and if I did not read them attentively, my money would have been thrown away, and I must have thought and confessed myself injudicious. I have read neither since, and I never shall possess either again. It is melancholy to think with how much more fondness and pride the writers of those days contemplated whatever was belonging to *Old England*. People now, in praising any scene or event, snarl all the while, and attack their neighbors for not praising.

\* "Of the Greek Grammar," he tells Southey in one of his letters, "I knew so little at seventeen that I read over the Port-Royal yearly for more than twenty years."

They feel a consciousness that the foundations of our greatness are impaired, and have occasioned a thousand little cracks and crevices to let in the cold air upon our comforts. Ah, Nassau and Oliver!—*Quis vobis tertius hæres?*” Certainly neither Sidmouth nor Castle-reagh, Southey would himself have answered; and the mere tone of the question is some proof that the purchase from the old woman’s stall was indeed a good one, and that to have read “attentively” at this time of life two such hearty old lovers of their country as Baker and Drayton had left a wholesome impression on this Rugby boy.

On the same form with him and Butler, all four having entered at about the same time, were Henry Cary and Walter Birch, both of them also Landor’s contemporaries at Oxford. Writing from Florence at nearly the close of his eighty-fifth year,\* he says: “Do not despise Cary’s *Dante*. It is wonderful how he could have turned the rhymes of Dante into unrhymed verse with any harmony: he has done it. Poor Cary! I remember him at Rugby and Oxford. He was the friend of my friend Walter Birch, whom I fought at Rugby, and who thrashed me well. He was a year older, and a better boxer: we were intimate ever afterwards, till his death.”† Many letters remain to attest this intimacy, which, a few years after Landor’s brief residence at Oxford, his brother Robert closely shared on coming into residence at Worcester College; Birch having by that time obtained a fellowship at Magdalen, and deservedly high repute among the most distinguished men in the other colleges. His elder brother was second master at Rugby;‡ and Landor often generously spoke of Walter Birch himself as having been the best Rugby scholar, as well as the boy with whom he had formed his closest and indeed his only real friendship. “I see this morning,” he wrote to me in 1854, “that Routh, the President of Magdalen, is dead. He was made president just before I entered the university. The first scholar admitted to his college after the election was my friend Walter Birch, the best scholar at Rugby, not excepting Butler. We used to walk together in Addison’s walk along the Cherwell. From Rugby we had often gone to Bilton, one mile off, a small estate bought by Addison, where his only daughter, an old fat woman of weak intellect, was then living, and lived a good while after,—three or four years. Surely I must have assisted in another life!”

Beyond such glimpses as these there is little more to relate of his Rugby days. Though he had not many intimacies in the school, he

\* October 23, 1860: the letter is addressed to Mr. Robert Lytton.

† “Cary,” the letter goes on in characteristic fashion, “had some subordinate place in the British Museum. He was a learned and virtuous man. Our ministers of state were never more consistent than in their neglect of him. One would imagine that they were all poets, only that they did not snarl or scowl at him.”

‡ To this brother of his friend, Landor sent a copy of his *Collected Works* in 1846 with the subjoined note: “My dear Dr. Birch: My old friendship with your brother Walter, my only one at Rugby, gives me a right of sending to you what it is the will of Providence that I cannot send to him. Accept it as a mark of my esteem for your manly character and graceful erudition; and believe me, my dear Dr. Birch, yours sincerely, W. S. LANDOR.”



was generally popular and respected, and used his influence often to save the younger boys from undue harshness or violence. This is mentioned in some recent recollections by one who was with him at Rugby; and an illustration may be added from a letter of his brother Henry's, when both had passed their seventieth year: "Do you think I ever forgot your kindness to me at Rugby, in threatening another boy who ill-used me if he again persisted in similar conduct? Or your gift of money to me at that time, when I verily believe you had not another shilling left for your own indulgences?"\* A like interference on behalf of another school-fellow of his own standing, with whom otherwise he had little in common, led to an intimacy that should be mentioned here; not for anything it adds to our knowledge of his school-days,† but because it brought pleasant associations to his later life. Between him and Fleetwood Parkhurst, son of an old Worcestershire squire descended from the Fleetwoods and Dormers, there was a discordance of taste and temper in most things; yet their connection survived the Rugby time; they met frequently after their school-days; they visited each other's families; Parkhurst was the only Rugby boy who went with him to the same college at Oxford; and they travelled on occasions together until quite thrown asunder by a quarrel,‡ which nevertheless in no respect abated the affection already conceived for his son's friend by the elder Mr. Parkhurst, and continued through the old squire's life. At Ripple Court, on the banks of the Severn, the family house, there was for years no happier guest; and when nearly half a century had passed, and Fleetwood's youngest sister had wedded a public man of distinction to be named later in this narrative, Landor reminded her of days still gratefully remembered.

\* Henry to Walter Landor: Tachbrooke, 2d January, 1847.

† I shall be forgiven for quoting a letter to myself of August, 1851, as well for its incidental mention of Rugby, and its other amusing references, as for its closing allusion to Walter Birch and Coplestone. Mentioning a writer "who likes to be fine," as having been "scornful at ladies (by possibility) *eating with their knives*," he goes on: "He means using them as we generally use forks. Everybody did it before silver-pronged forks were common. When I was at Rugby we had only steel forks of three prongs. Verily do I believe, on recollection, that they were only of two until the age grew delicate. It is probable that our Sardanapalus George the Fourth had no silver fork at eight or nine years of age. Coryat, in his *Crudities*, is horrified at the luxury of the Venetians, among whom he first saw such a portent. I once observed a French lady of high rank, no less a personage than a duchess, not only use her knife as a baker uses his shovel, but pick her teeth with it, resting her elbow on the table. In France the Graces seem to leave the room when the ladies sit down to dinner. They are certainly more free and easy at such times than ours are. Nine in ten of ours would think it indecorous to *cut* their turbot, but would rather tear it in pieces, and besmear their plates with it. The more fools they, — as well as the more inelegant. Turbot, by the fork alone, is almost as indomitable as venison. If I were anybody of consequence, I should like to shock Squire ———'s ultra-Chesterfieldism by a display of my manipulation on a turbot four inches thick. He should see the precision of my quadratures. I am glad you think highly of Coplestone. He was the friend of my friend Walter Birch, who had only a single unworthy one, WALTER LANDOR."

‡ I find in one of Landor's letters of 1844 a reference to the close of the life of this companion of his youth. He had fallen dead in the streets of Bristol. "Little as poor Parkhurst is to be respected, I am shocked and grieved at his death. A happier one, however, there could not be. I shall often think of our early friendship and our happier days."



"Where Malvern's verdant ridges gleam  
 Beneath the morning ray,  
 Look eastward: see Sabrina's stream  
 Roll rapidly away. . . .  
 The lord of these domains was one  
 Who loved me like an only son." \*

Remaining at Rugby till he was past his fifteenth year, he had meanwhile been joined there by his younger brothers Charles and Henry; and in a letter to the latter written in 1847 we get our first glimpse of their father, Doctor Landor, at this early time. Naming some communication received from the head of the Lawley family, he says Lord Wenlock had reminded him that their families had been intimate for sixty years, but that his own memory carries him further back. "It is sixty-five years since Sir Robert Lawley stood godfather to our brother Robert. I was at Canwell (so was Charles) with my father when I was about eleven years old. We went coursing, for we rode our ponies. One morning we went into the stable, and Sir Robert said to my father, stopping in a certain spot, 'Landor, how many bottles of port have we drank together just about here?' 'Better talk of dozens, Sir Robert,' said my father. He and his father must have known my grandfather, for he quoted as a saying of his father's that my grandfather was *an honest dog for a Jacobite*, and screamed with laughter as he said it." It was but a year after this incident that young Walter had a visitor who might have seemed not wholly unconnected with those dozens of port, and to have brought him unsought and premature instalment of his entailed estates of inheritance. The alarm was a false one, this particular legacy going to his younger brothers; but the reader will appreciate the quiet humor with which one of them, who received from his father no better portion, tells the tale.

"Though followed," writes Mr. Robert Landor, "by two younger brothers as soon as they could be received at Rugby, there remains nothing worth recording till he was twelve years old, — when a violent fit of the gout — gout which might have qualified him for an alderman — restored him to his mother's care at Warwick. Never was there a more impatient sufferer; and his imprecations, divided equally between the gout and his nurses, were heard afar. It is also strange

\* The poem from which these lines are taken was sent to Mrs. Rosenhagen in May, 1839, with a letter, in which he tells her: "I am not quite so young as I was, nor quite so free from cares and infirmities as you remember me at Ripple. Believe me, I very often think of the very kind friends who received me there with such cordiality. Your father was as fond of me as if I had been his son; and never did I shed so many tears for the loss of any man." In one of his letters of 1830, from Florence, he prays his sister Elizabeth not to omit to tell her that he often thinks of the many happy days he spent at Ripple. "I believe I should shed tears if I saw the place again. No person in my early days was so partial to me as her father was." Finally, let me give from another of his letters a dialogue (not altogether imaginary) illustrative of this friend of his youth. "My excellent old friend, Mr. Parkhurst, was appointed by Lord North to be one of the commissaries to the armies in North America. On his return he met Lord North in the Park. 'What, Parkhurst! you a commissary! and in your old family coach?' 'Yes, my lord! thank God! and without a shilling more in my pocket than when I set out.' 'A pretty thing to thank God for!' rejoined my lord."

that there never was any return of this disorder. Our father suffered from it, and all three of the younger brothers ; but though Walter's appetite much surpassed the best of ours (or the worst), he escaped it during more than seventy years. However active at dinner, he was always temperate after it ; and I never saw the smallest sign of excess, though he greatly enjoyed three or four glasses of light wine. He remained at Rugby till fifteen or sixteen, and gained the character of more than common scholarship by his Latin verses especially. However violent his temper might have been, I think that he was liked as well as respected by his school-fellows ; for some of them, whom I knew many years later, always remembered him with pleasure."

But, before finally quitting Rugby, an event of importance in a poet's life is to be recorded. While still in the school, and not more than fourteen, he had written his first original verses ; with a certain sobriety of tone as well as absence of commonplace in the metre not usual in so young a beginner, and probably derived from exercises previously made in translations of which we can premise a word or two on his own authority. "The only Latin metre I ever tried in English," he told Southey when thanking him for his *Vision of Judgment* in 1824, "is the Sapphic. This is extremely easy. When I was at Rugby I wrote a vast number, and some few at Oxford. My earliest attempt was the translation of Sappho's odes : of which I remember only a part of the first stanza, — no very good specimen. First I had written, 'O Venus, goddess' ; afterwards, 'Venus ! O goddess both of earth and heaven.' The next I forget. The third was,

' From the sublime throne variously tinged  
Hear my petition ! ' "

This sort of practice was no bad preparation for his first original attempt, made upon a cousin's marriage at her own request, and on the whole not worse or better than such things commonly are. But more interesting than the verses themselves is the letter I find with them in his papers, indorsed by himself "Miss Norris," addressed to "Mr. Landor, at Rugby," and written from his father's house in Warwick. The writer, who was of the family from whom his mother derived the estates of Ipsley and Tachbrooke, had obtained some influence over him, and here uses it to confirm what was best in his tastes and temper, with correction of what was worst in both. She thanks him for his poetry, thinks it exceedingly pretty, and wonders he should hesitate a moment to present it to the lady who requested he would write it for her. He is to recollect that at his age people are not to expect a Milton or a Pope ; and that should any inaccuracies occur, which she assures him she has not been able to discover, they will be attributed to youth and inexperience. She says that Mrs. Landor desires her love to him, and hopes he received her letter and some pigeons she had sent for him and his brothers. She sends



Doctor Landor's respects; and says he has not been able to find for her an earlier poetical piece containing Walter's thoughts on public and private education, which he had wished that she should read. "I cannot help," she continues, "admiring your way of employing your time. Youth is doubtless the season for study and improvement; and though we may not at all times find it agreeable, yet when we consider how despicable a figure the ignorant and uninformed make, it excites us to persevere with unceasing industry. I think you are much in the right to make the most learned your friends and companions; but permit me to say, that though I think a proper spirit commendable and even necessary at times, yet in my opinion it is better to submit *sometimes* to those under whose authority we are, even when we think they are in fault, than to run the risk of being esteemed arrogant and self-sufficient." The date of the letter is the 23d of September, 1790, little more than a year after the fall of the Bastille; and the revolt against authority it rebukes with such wise tenderness has relation to one of the many differences between the scholar and his master which had occurred at this time. Landor was afterwards so willing to forget these encounters, and to recall nothing of the old doctor not kindly and grateful, that the allusion to them now shall be brief.

He seems to have thought, when in the school, that Doctor James either would not or could not appreciate what he did in Latin verse, and that when he was driven to take special notice of it, he took the worst, and not the best, for the purpose. Thus, when told very graciously on one occasion to copy out fairly in the Play-book verses by himself of which he thought indifferently, Landor in making the copy put private additions to it of several lines, with a coarse allusion beginning, "Hæc sunt malorum pessima carminum quæ Landor unquam scripsit," &c. This offence was forgiven; but it was followed by another of which the circumstances were such as to render it impossible that he should continue longer in the school. The right at first was on Landor's side, for Doctor James had strongly insisted on, and the other as firmly had declined, the correction of an alleged false quantity found really not to exist. But, apart from the right or wrong of the dispute, an expression in the course of it rudely used by the pupil, and not necessary to be repeated here, was very sharply resented by the master; and when the matter came to be talked about, only one result was possible. "When between fifteen and sixteen," writes Mr. Robert Landor, "he was not expelled from Rugby, but removed as the less discreditable punishment, at the head-master's suggestion. There was nothing unusual or disgraceful in the particular transgression, but a fierce defiance of all authority, and a refusal to ask forgiveness."

Yet not so should we part from his Rugby days. He has himself given a picture of one of the latest of them appealing to kindlier remembrance. Sitting by the square pool not long before he left, he



had written a little poem on Godiva; and, in a note to his Imaginary Conversation on the charming old Warwickshire story, he not only relates how the school-fellow to whom he showed his earlier effort laughed at him, and how earnestly he had to entreat and implore him not to "tell the other lads," but he repeats the verses. With which, as he transcribes them in his villa at Fiesole, there comes back to him the very air of the school-boy spot in which first they were written, and fervently he wishes that the peppermint may still be growing on the bank by the Rugby pool. It is a pretty picture, and the lines themselves are of a kind to haunt the memory.

"In every hour, in every mood,  
O lady, it is sweet and good  
To bathe the soul in prayer;  
And, at the close of such a day,  
When we have ceased to bless and pray,  
To dream on thy long hair."

#### V. AT ASHBOURNE.

Rugby had, nevertheless, given pretty nearly all in the way of scholarship she had to give to Landor, when he was thus, though still too young for the university, compelled to bid her adieu. An intermediate place between school and college it was necessary to provide; and, writes Mr. Robert Landor, "at sixteen he was consigned to the tuition of a clergyman living in Derbyshire who had no other pupil, and who seemed well qualified for the office by patience and gentleness. Walter always spoke of him with respect; but though by no means ignorant, the tutor had very little more scholarship than the pupil, and his Latin verses were hardly so good as Walter's." This was Mr. Langley, Vicar of Ashbourne, — the charming country village Landor has so prettily described in his delightful conversation of Walton, Cotton, and Oldways, where he takes occasion also to render tribute to his worthy old tutor, and makes Walton say of such masters and their scholars that they live like princes, converse like friends, and part like lovers. "He would take only one private pupil," he says in a note to that conversation, "and never had but me. The kindness of him and his wife to me was parental. They died nearly together, about five-and-twenty years ago. Never was a youth blessed with three such indulgent and affectionate private tutors as I was; before by the elegant and generous Doctor John Sleath at Rugby, and after by the saintly Benwell at Oxford." In a letter to myself written hardly eleven years ago, he makes another allusion to these days passed in Derbyshire between sixty and seventy years before which may be worth preserving.\* "My old tutor at Ashbourne, poor dear Langley, had seen Pope when he came to

\* Other similar allusions were frequent; as in a letter to me of 1851. "It is exactly sixty years since I saw Chatsworth. I was at that time under a private tutor at Ashbourne, having just left Rugby, and being a little too young for Oxford."

visit Oxford from Lord Harcourt's at Nurem. Doctor Harrington of *Oceana's* family dined at Allen's, where he did not meet Pope, but did meet Fielding. Pope, I believe, was then dead. Harrington was almost a boy, fourteen or fifteen years old. He sat at dinner by his father, and Fielding on the other side. Warburton was there, and with great pomposity made a speech eulogistic of Allen, who had said a few words, modest and unimportant. 'Gentlemen,' said Warburton, 'many of us have enjoyed the benefits of a university education, but which among us can speak so wisely and judiciously?' Fielding turned his face round to Harrington and said pretty loudly, 'Hark to that sycophantic son of a — of a parson!' I doubt whether the double genitive case was ever so justly (however inelegantly) employed." \* When recollections such as these came back to Landor, he might be pardoned the exclamation we have lately heard from him, that surely he must have assisted in another life! Born in the year when the English colonies in America rebelled; living through all the revolutions in France, and the astonishing career of the great Napoleon; a sympathizer with the defeated Paoli and the victorious Garibaldi; contemporary with Cowper and Burns, yet the survivor of Keats, Wordsworth, and Byron, of Shelley, Scott, and Southey; living while Gibbon's first volume and Macaulay's last were published; to whom Pitt and Fox, and even Burke, had been familiar, as were Peel and Russell; who might have heard Mirabeau attempting to save the French Monarchy, and Mr. Gladstone predicting the disruption of the American Republic, — it would seem strange that a single life should be large enough for such experiences, if their very number and variety did not suggest the exaggeration of importance that each in its turn is too apt to receive from us all, and impress us rather with the wisdom of the saying of the greatest of poets, that

"We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of; and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep."

When the two years at Ashbourne were passed, they had left some profitable as well as pleasant remembrances. He dated from this time his better acquaintance with some of the Greek writers, especially Sophocles and Pindar; he turned several things of Cowley into

\* I permit myself to add, as every way very characteristic of the writer, then on the eve of his eightieth year, the closing lines of this letter of my old friend. He was waiting at the time the visit I generally paid him on his birthday. "In the twentieth year of the British Republic some old man may recount tales of you and me. He will not be a very old man, if public affairs are managed another year as they have been this last.

'FORSTER! come hither, I pray, to the Fast of our Anglican Martyr. Turbot our Church has allowed, and perhaps (not without dispensation) Pheasant: then strawberry-cream, green-gages, and apricot-jelly, Oranges housewives call *pot*, and red-rinded nuts of Avella, Filberts we name them at home, — happy they who have teeth for the crackers! Blest, but in lower degree, whose steel-armed right hand overcomes them! I, with more envy than spite, look on and sip sadly my claret.'



Latin Sapphics and Alcaics ; he wrote a few English pieces ; and he translated into verse the *Jephthah* of Buchanan, a poem afterwards destroyed, but of which he had himself so high an opinion that he said he could not have improved it even after he wrote *Gebir*. I should strongly have doubted this, upon examination of several poems of the present date, preserved in the volume collected and printed four years later, for he was still within the trammels of Pope's versification, and though in conception often original, in execution was still almost always imitative ; but that other indisputable evidence is before me of the higher character given gradually to his own style by the mere effort of translating. There was indeed but one stride to be taken to *Gebir*, which appeared within three years after the volume referred to ; and the reader will probably admit, at that portion of my narrative, that a more remarkable advance in power was never made, and rarely such an achievement in literature by a man so young. Let me show meanwhile, by example of a poem written at Ashbourne,\* in what different ways the same subject was treated now and in the days that were so soon to follow of his greater maturity of mind. It is the difference between a Pope translation and a Greek original.

MEDEA AT CORINTH (1791).

“ So, when Medea, on her native strand,  
Beheld the Argo lessen from the land ;  
The tender pledges of her love she bore,  
Frantic, and raised them high above the shore.  
‘ Thus, thus may Jason, faithless as he flies,  
Faithless, and heedless of Medea’s cries,  
Behold his babes, oppose the adverse gales,  
And turn to Colchis those retiring sails.’  
She spake: in vain: then maddened with despair  
Tore her pale cheeks and undulating hair.  
Then, O, unmindful of all former joys,  
Threw from her breast her inoffensive boys ;  
Their tender limbs and writhing fibres tore,  
And whirled around the coast the inexpiable gore ! ”

THE SAME SUBJECT (*a few years later*).

“ ‘ Stay ! spare him ! save the last ! . . .  
I will invoke the Eumenides no more —  
I will forgive thee — bless thee — bend to thee  
In all thy wishes ! do but thou, Medea,  
Tell me, one lives ! ’ ‘ And shall I, too, deceive ? ’  
Cries from the fiery car an angry voice ;  
And swifter than two falling stars descend  
Two breathless bodies, — warm, soft, motionless  
As flowers in stillest noon before the sun,  
They lie three paces from him. Such they lie,  
As when he left them sleeping side by side,  
A mother’s arm round each, a mother’s cheeks  
Between them, flusht with happiness and love.  
He was more changed than they were, — doomed to show

\* In a note to one of its lines on the misfortunes of the King of France he remarks, that “ when this was written Louis had only returned to Paris after his flight,” which was in 1791 ; and to the fate which afterwards befell the king he applies a passage from the *Electra* of Sophocles.



Thee and the stranger, how defaced and scarred  
Grief hunts us down the precipice of years!"

Even in the earliest poem here quoted, however, which contains also a paraphrase from Cowley, there is greater merit than the *Medea* passage would indicate. In single verses occasionally there is a happy delicacy of touch, as in the picture of Eve:—

"And her locks of gold  
Gales, airy-fingered, negligently hold."

From time to time, too, a personal trait is given with extraordinary force; as where he states his preference for nature and enjoyment over studies and self-mortification.

"Thus, throughout nature every part affords  
More sound instruction than from 'winged words.'  
By me more felt, more studied, than the rules  
Of pedants strutting in sophistic schools;  
Who, argumentative, with endless strife,  
In search of living lose the ends of life;  
Or, willing exiles from fair pleasure's train,  
Howl at the happy from the dens of pain."

Of those same "winged words" that could offer instruction higher than the schools he speaks also not unworthily.

"Had verse not led in adamantine chains  
The victims sacrificed on Ilion's plains,  
Who would have heard of Hector? who have known  
The rage of Peleus's immortal son?"

Nor will space be grudged for a few couplets more; from a poem not now obtainable, and which shows Landor's mastery in writing when he had hardly entered his seventeenth year. He describes the origin of pipe and pastoral.

"By bounteous rivers, 'mid his flocks reclined  
He heard the reed that rustled in the wind.  
Then, leaning onward, negligently tore  
The slender stem from off the fringed shore.  
With mimic breath the whisper soft assayed—  
When, lo! the yielding reed his mimic breath obeyed.  
'T was hence, ere long, the pleasing power he found  
Of noted numbers and of certain sound.  
Each morn and eve their fine effect he tried,  
Each morn and eve he blest the river's reedy side!"

Poets of the highest originality take their point of departure from an imitative stage, and Landor in these verses shows no exemption from the rule. But from the first the influence of his classical studies and temperament is more than ordinarily manifest, and the completeness and rapidity with which it formed his original style is worthy of remark. I have hinted at this in allusion to his *Jephthah* translation. A marked instance has been given in the second version of the *Medea* just quoted; and another more extraordinary presents itself in a translation of one of the most famous episodes in Virgil, which I

have found in scraps of his handwriting of the date of 1794, and with which I shall close this section.\*

"The shell assuaged his sorrow: thee he sang,  
Sweet wife! thee with him on the shore alone,  
At rising dawn, at parting day, sang thee.  
The mouth of Tænarus, the gates of Dis,  
Groves dark with dread, he entered; he approacht  
The Manes and their awful king, and hearts  
That knew not pity yet for human prayer.  
Roused at his song, the Shades of Erebus  
Rose from their lowest, most remote, abodes,  
Faint Shades, and Spirits semblances of life;  
Numberless as o'er woodland wilds the birds  
That wintry evening drives or mountain storm;  
Mothers and husbands, unsubstantial crests  
Of high-souled heroes, boys, unmarried maids,  
And youths on biers before their parents' eyes.  
The deep black ooze and rough unsightly reed  
Of slow Cocytus's unyielding pool  
And Styx confines them, flowing ninefold round.  
The halls and inmost Tartarus of Death,  
And (the blue adders twisting in their hair)  
The Furies, were astounded.

On he stept,  
And Cerberus held agape his triple jaws:  
On stept the Bard . . . Ixion's wheel stood still.

Now, past all peril, free was his return,  
And now was following into upper air  
Eurydice, when sudden madness seized  
The incautious lover: pardonable fault,  
If those below could pardon: on the verge  
Of light he stood, and on Eurydice,  
Mindless of fate, alas, and soul-subdued,  
Lookt back . . .

There, Orpheus! Orpheus! there was all  
Thy labor shed, there burst the dynast's bond,  
And thrice arose that rumor from the lake.

'Ah, what,' she cried, 'what madness hath undone  
Me, and (ah, wretched!) thee, my Orpheus, too!  
For, lo! the cruel Fates recall me now,  
Chill slumbers press my swimming eyes . . . farewell!  
Night rolls intense around me as I spread  
My helpless arms . . . thine, thine no more . . . to thee.'

She spake, and (like a vapor) into air  
Flew, nor beheld him as he claspt the void  
And sought to speak; in vain: the ferry-guard  
Now would not row him o'er the lake again:  
His wife twice lost, what could he? whither go?  
What chant, what wailing, move the powers of Hell?  
Cold in the Stygian bark and lone was she!

Beneath a rock o'er Strymon's flood on high  
Seven months, seven long-continued months, 't is said,  
He breathed his sorrows in a desert cave,  
And soothed the tiger, moved the oak, with song.  
So Philomela 'mid the poplar shade  
Bemoans her captive brood: the cruel hind  
Saw them unplumed and took them: but all night  
Grieves she, and sitting on the bough, runs o'er  
Her wretched tale, and fills the woods with woe."

\* Since this was written, I find that these very lines, with extremely trivial alteration, were printed by him in the *Examiner* thirty years ago, as having been "written at college." He subsequently reproduced them without that prefatory remark, but with an interesting note, in his *Dry Sticks*.

Few ancient pieces have been chosen oftener by translators as a ground of competition; yet, from Dryden to Wordsworth, there is no one who has excelled, if any has equalled, this translation by a youth of nineteen. Its minute fidelity to the spirit of the original I will indicate by a touch which all the others have missed. They make the nightingale sitting on "a" bough, but Landor restores "*the*" bough; the fatal bough from which the spoiler had taken her brood. But to me the lines are interesting, and are here specially given, for their illustration of the growth of his own genius. If I had met with them anywhere, not knowing the lines of Virgil, I should have supposed them to be an original poem of the writer's later life. He has nevertheless not passed the imitative stage. His own thoughts have not yet found their style. Their written character is still to come.

## VI. AT TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.

At eighteen years of age Landor entered as a commoner in Trinity College, Oxford. It was the memorable year of 1793, which had opened at Paris with the execution of Louis Seize. Of the excitement that prevailed; of the conflicting passions that were raging everywhere, grief on the one hand at the downfall of ancient institutions, exultation on the other at supposed triumphs of justice and reason, — it is needless to speak. To the young\* it was natural to believe that a new world was opening; and the glorious visions that attended it descended largely, it may well be imagined, on the students at both Universities. As Wordsworth says for himself, society became his glittering bride, and airy hopes his children. I cannot find, however, that Landor was at any time much excited in this way. The American rebellion was oftener in his thoughts than the French revolution. He was a Jacobin, but so would have been if Robespierre and Danton had not been. He reasoned little, but his instincts were all against authority, or what took to him the form of its abuse. With exulting satisfaction he saw the resistance and conquests of democracy; but pantisocracy, and golden days to come on earth, were not in his hopes or expectation. He rather rejoiced in the prospect of a fierce continued struggle; his present ideal was that of an armed republic,† changing the face of the world; and as the outbreak of the revolution had not made him republican, neither did its excesses cure him of that malady. He gloried to the last in avowing his preference for a republic; though he would also date his hatred of the French, which he maintained with almost equal consistency, from the

\* "Bliss was it in the dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very Heaven!"

*Wordsworth in Coleridge's Ode.*

The same words, with change of "the" for "that" in the first line, reappeared in his own *Prelude*.

† Speaking to Southey of Napoleon's career in 1811, he says: "This revives in my mind a toast I was accused of giving at Oxford: 'May there be only two classes of people, the republican and the paralytic!'"



day when they slew their Queen. Mr. Shandy might have connected all this with his birth on the anniversary of Charles the First's execution.

He remained at Oxford little more than a year and a half, between 1793 and 1794, and used to call the hours passed with Walter Birch in the Magdalen walk by the half-hidden Cherwell (the road of which Addison was so fond) the pleasantest he could remember, as well as the most profitable. Of his studies there is little to be said. For a portion of the time he certainly read hard, but the results he kept to himself; for here, as at Rugby, he declined everything in the shape of competition. "Though I wrote better Latin verses than any undergraduate or graduate in the University," he wrote to Dr. Davy, in 1857, "I could never be persuaded, by my tutor or friends, to contend for any prize whatever. I showed my compositions to Birch of Magdalen, my old friend at Rugby; and to Cary, translator of Dante; to none else." It is at the same time unquestionable that his extraordinary talents, and skill in both the ancient languages, had impressed greatly his tutor Benwell, and the president and fellows of Trinity; and I have heard him say frequently that Benwell ("dear good Benwell") shed tears when his favorite pupil was obliged to quit the college. But the Universities then, with far less inducement to study than now, had even fewer restraints than at present exist for youths unable to restrain themselves; the license generally allowed left a man quite equally free to use, abuse, or waste his powers; and we have only to wonder how so many lads of fortune, so let loose at that critical time, could manage to get on in after life with any kind of credit. I hardly remember an allusion by Landor to the examination-halls or lecture-rooms, except that in the latter, one day, *Justin* was given them to construe, and that though indignant at the choice of such an author, he was reconciled on finding there the story of the Phocæans, which he straightway began to turn into English blank verse, a measure he had not before attempted.

One other subject that interested him, however, finds mention in his letters. There is allusion in one of them to a small disquisition sent at this time to Dr. Parr, with whom an acquaintance, already formed at Warwick, was soon to ripen into intimacy. The object of the essay was to give opinion as to the origin of the religion of the Druids; and its argument may be very briefly stated. It appeared to Landor that Pythagoras, who settled in Italy and had many followers in the Greek colony of the Phocæans at Marseilles, had ingrafted on a barbarous and blood-thirsty religion the human doctrine of the metempsychosis; for that, finding it was vain to say, "Do not murder," as none ever minded that doctrine, he frightened the savages by saying, "If you are cruel even to beasts and insects, the cruelty will fall upon yourselves; you will be the same." He explained also the "beans" of the old philosopher in the exact way that Coleridge took credit for afterwards originating; though in this both moderns

had been anticipated by sundry other discoverers, beginning with Plutarch himself.\*

But not always so philosophical or remote were his labors out of the lecture-room. Much nearer lay London than either Justin or Pythagoras; the summer of 1794, when Landor's Oxford residence was about to draw to its close, was a time of unexampled excitement; and some notice must be taken of the other than classical subjects in which his ardent temper engaged him. The Scotch judges had transported Muir and Palmer and Gerrard as felons, for desiring Parliamentary reform; the English judges were expected to hang Holcroft and Horne Tooke as traitors for "corresponding" with the same desire; and by all this Landor was stung into writing a satire, making himself interlocutor with a clerical friend. He listens to the other's warning:—

"Hush! why complain? of treason have a care;  
You hear of Holcroft and of Tooke—beware!"

and indignantly rejoins:—

"Before a tyrant Juvenal displayed  
Truth's hated form and Satire's flaming blade;  
With hand unshaken bore her mirror-shield:  
Vice gazed and trembled,—shrieked and left the field.  
Shall I dissemble then?"

following up his question by vigorous denunciation of the war with France, and impassioned appeal to Poland, then just rising again:—

"O, bear no longer! longer canst thou bear  
Three royal ruffians thus thy rights to tear?  
Rights that thy guardian countryman has signed,  
Freedom's pure page, the lesson of mankind."

The friend again interposes:—

"Mistaken youth! the milder plan pursue,  
To love what statesmen and what monarchs do.  
Hence no political, no civil strife,  
Thy death will hasten, or torment thy life.  
In the same steps the greatest men have trod,  
Far our superiors."

\* See De Quincey's *Autobiographic Sketches*, pp. 146, 147, and note. I subjoin what Landor wrote to me in a letter of the 23d October, 1854. "To-day, having had a tooth drawn, and a jaw in danger of a divorce, I have been reading Mr. De Quincey's *Selections*. I was amused at finding attributed to the sagacity of Coleridge a remark on Pythagoras and his beans. I made the same remark in a letter to Parr, which Dr. John Johnstone wished to publish with all my others. It may be also found in the letters of *Pericles and Aspasia*, I believe. Mine to Parr was written in 1794 or thereabouts, and when the name of Coleridge had never reached me. These are estrays and waifs not worth claiming by the lord of the manor. Coleridge and Wordsworth are heartily welcome to a day's sport over any of my woodlands and heaths. I have no preserves." Since writing this note I have found among Landor's papers Parr's acknowledgment of the letter referred to. "Dear Walter," wrote the kindly old scholar, "I thank you for your very acute and masterly reasoning about Pythagoras, but I am no convert to his being in Gaul; for the doctrine of transmigration is much older, and prevailed among the Celts and Scythians long before Pythagoras. It is believed, even now, in the north of Europe, and would naturally suggest itself to any reflecting barbarian. However, you have done very well in your hypothesis. I am, with great regard and respect, dear Walter, your sincere friend, S. PARR."



To which Landor :—

*"I believe in God.*

This only reason, courtly priest! I give.  
Go, cease to moralize: learn first to live."

From three other poems of this date, none of them being elsewhere now accessible, brief extracts may also be permitted. The first illustrates the war against liberty by picturing a French village, into which it had brought desolation, repaired again, and peace restored, by the arms of the Republic; and both in the thought and in the form of the verse (which, as far as I am aware, he never again used), there is considerable beauty. The "arms unbound" is a touch of the happiest kind,—in its careless yet conscious keeping with the spirit of the poem.

'Twas evening calm, when village maids  
With Gallia's tuneful sons advance  
To frolic in the jovial dance,  
'Mid purple vines and olive-shades.

Their ancient sires that round them sit  
Renew in thought their youthful days;  
Some try the tottering step, or praise  
Their former fame for gallant wit. . . .

But, O, the rulers of mankind  
Ruthless their fellow-creatures seize,  
Nor radiant eyes nor suppliant knees  
Of Beauty can their fury bind . . .

Smoke fills the air, and dims the day:  
No more the vine of matted green  
Or thin-leaved olive now are seen,  
Or bird upon the trembling spray . . .

But o'er yon slope, a willing band,  
With smiles unfeigned and arms unbound,  
March to the pipe's enchanting sound  
From fierce Oppression's proud command.

'Foes once, by force; now happy friends!  
Be welcome to the sprightly dance,  
To peace, to liberty, to France,  
Where pride's accursed empire ends.'

The second, of which the opening stanzas show the sweet modulation of genuine verse, paints a Sunday morning in May.

"O, peaceful day of pious leisure!  
O, what will mark you as you run!  
Will Melancholy, or will Pleasure,  
Will gloomy clouds, or golden sun?

"O, shine serenely: let me wander  
Along the willow-fringed way,  
Where, lingering in each meander,  
Charmed Isis wins a short delay."

The third is an "Ode to General Washington," in which are lines that not many boys of nineteen have before or since excelled in strength of expression or dignity of sentiment.



"Exulting on unwearied wings  
 Above where incense clouds the court of kings,  
 Arise, immortal Muse! arise!  
 Beyond the confines of the Atlantic waves,  
 O'er cities free from despots, free from slaves,  
 Go, seek the tepid calm of purer skies.

"But, hail thou hero! born to prove  
 Thy country's glory and thy country's love,  
 To break her regal iron rod:  
 Of justice certain, fearless of success,  
 Her rights to vindicate, her wrongs redress,  
 Her sceptre to transfer from tyrants to her God.

"And even *thou* to Nature's law  
 Wilt bend, with reverence and majestic awe,  
 As now to thee thy Country bends:  
 Yet, O my Washington! the fatal hour  
 Deprives thee only of an *active* power,  
 Nor with thy victories thy triumph ends.

"The days of playful youth engage  
 The pleasing memory of age:  
 Thus, when we fly from toil and pain  
 Thither, where the Just remain,  
 No clouds that float beneath can screen  
 Our former country from our wistful sight!  
 O Man! how happy to review the scene  
 Thyself hast blest! how godlike a delight!"

If the rumors that went abroad through Oxford of Landor's fierce and uncompromising opinions had rested only on pieces such as these, he might fairly have challenged the truth of epithets thrown against him by assailants; but unhappily his tongue was under less instinctive control than his pen, and, there being students of his own college who held opinions in the other extreme with as little disposition to withhold expression of them, the result was not favorable to peace in the halls of Trinity. Even among those of Landor's own way of thinking in the University, there were many who seem purposely to have kept aloof from him; not because he was a Jacobin, but because he was a "mad" Jacobin; though it is not at all clear that the epithet might not have been accepted to mean a more sensible sort of Jacobinism than was popular in the particular quarters from which it proceeded. "At Oxford," said Landor, recalling this time in his old age, "I was about the first student who wore his hair without powder. Take care, said my tutor, they will stone you for a republican. The Whigs (not the Wigs) were then unpopular; but I stuck to my plain hair and queue tied with black ribbon." Hardly for this eccentricity, however, was the epithet applicable in their mouths who applied it. His inspiration doubtless had been the minister Roland's refusal to go to court in either knee-buckles or shoe-buckles; and, under influence of the same example, a youth six months older than Landor was then also waging at Balliol so fierce a war against old ceremonies and usage, that he too had resisted every

attempt of the college barber to dress or powder him, and had gone into hall in flowing locks ; yet the remark upon the madness of Landor's Jacobinism was given by this very student of Balliol, a few years later, as his only reason for not having now sought Landor's acquaintance. *Gebir* had then appeared and been placed in the first rank of English poetry by the same youth, who in the interval had himself published *Joan of Arc* ; when, upon the name of the writer of *Gebir* becoming known to him one day, all the Oxford recollection flashed back upon him. "I now remember," Robert Southey wrote to his friend Humphry Davy at Bristol, "who the author of the *Gebir* is. He was a contemporary of mine at Oxford, of Trinity, and notorious as a mad Jacobin. His Jacobinism would have made me seek his acquaintance, but for his madness. He was obliged to leave the University for shooting at one of the Fellows through the window. All this I immediately recollected on getting at his name." The latter recollection was not quite accurate, but the substance of it unfortunately was true ;\* and it is now necessary to relate the incident which closed Landor's career at Oxford.

I again avail myself of one of Mr. Robert Landor's letters. "At eighteen he entered as a commoner in Trinity College, Oxford, and was rusticated after a year's residence. Again, as at Rugby, there was no greater offence than might have been overlooked if the general character had been less ungovernable. He had fired his fowling-piece into the window of some one whom he hated for his *Toryism*. Refusing to make any concession, he was rusticated during one year ; but he was almost requested to return at the year's end, for his abilities were justly estimated." These words have full confirmation in a more detailed account written a few months later by Landor himself to his most intimate friend at the University, which by a singular accident has survived until now. But a few prefatory words are needed to explain what it will also necessarily communicate of Landor's present relations with his father, from which unhappily all

\* The letter of Southey quoted in the text having been found in 1857 among Sir Humphry Davy's letters by his brother, Doctor Davy, the latter sent a copy of it to Landor, asking him if it was true (which he could "hardly believe, except under extraordinary provocation"). Landor replied at once ; and the reader may be interested to see his brief statement of the occurrence, written after a lapse of more than sixty-three years, and to compare it with the detailed account to be shortly given as written at the time, the same number of years before. This later description shows no failure of memory, and no wish to exaggerate or extenuate. Substantially both are the same. "My usual fire of laughter," he writes, "burst forth on reading your letter. The fire across the quadrangle was hardly louder or hardly more inoffensive. The fact is this: In the morning I had been rabbit-shooting ; in the evening I had an after-dinner party. My gun was lying in the bedroom ; one of my guests proposed to fire it at a closed window-shutter opposite, — the room was a man's with whom I had never had a quarrel or spoken a word. Fleetwood Parkhurst was the only one in my college with whom I had any intimacy ; the rest of the company was mostly of Christ Church. I should not have been rusticated for two terms unless the action had been during prayers. Kett who afterwards hanged himself, and thereby proved for the first time his honesty and justice, told the president, Chapman, that he was too lenient. . . . Southey did not find me quite so mad as he expected when he visited me at Clifton, the first or second year (I think) of this century." It was four or five years later than that.



that imbittered the incident arose ; and the reader will understand why I make as brief as possible this unavoidable allusion.

All who knew Doctor Landor adopt the same tone in speaking of him. What is remembered of him by his sons is identical with what I have been able to gather from other sources. The slightest symptom of arrogance or vanity none can recollect in him. He disputed no one's pretensions, and was always silent about his own. With much more than the average amount of sense and learning common to country gentlemen of that time, he made no comparisons, but took his place among them unconscious of any difference that might have placed him far above them. Social and hospitable, he never thought of rivalry. Landor himself used to say of him, that no other person ever equalled the simple pleasantry with which his anecdotes were related ; and these had such a charm that his sons were accustomed to provoke their repetition by little artifices, though they could anticipate almost every word. Mentioning this in one of his letters, Mr. Robert Landor continues : " As a magistrate he had a large acquaintance among the senior barristers, and I have often met at his table Mr. Romilly (Sir Samuel), with other men of both parties, for he was very liberal in opinion. But I do not think that my brother Walter was ever present. He hated law and lawyers then almost as much as he despised the Church and its ministers at all times ; and the gentlemanly manners by which he was distinguished thirty years later had then no existence." This indicates sufficiently a source of disagreement between father and son, in which their only point of agreement, an excessive warmth of temper common to both, had frequent occasion of exercise. With whom the wrong must have lain in such quarrels would hardly admit of doubt, even if no memory had survived to acquit Doctor Landor, not only of the faintest trace of arrogance to his children, but of all contemptuous depreciation of other people, and indeed of anything like pride. On this, therefore, nothing further will be said beyond such statement as the facts render necessary.

But, delicate as the ground is on which I find myself thus early, it would be a wrong to the excellent person from whom I have derived so many interesting recollections, not to say at once that if he had less frankly complied with my urgent and reiterated request for the actual truth of his brother's earlier history, the memoir could not have been undertaken at all. My personal knowledge extended only to Landor's later life ; and recollections derived exclusively from himself I found to be too often incompatible with the statements of others to be used with perfect safety. Not that Landor would at any time consciously have practised deception. The absence of it in his nature in regard to such learning as he possessed, noticed already by his brother, extended to every part of his life. Never was any man so little of a hypocrite ; for it was not until he had grossly deceived himself, that any one was in danger of being deceived by him



upon any subject whatever. But, with an imagination to the very last incessantly and actively busy, it was not difficult that by himself he should be so misled ; that he should not at all times be able to distinguish between the amusement of his fancy and the certainty of his recollection ; and that, without charging him with even carelessness as to truth, his facts should occasionally prove to have been hardly less imaginary than his conversations. As to all else, the most just as well as ultimately the kindest account will be that, which, in remembering these things, is careful to keep equally in mind his temper and temperament, distinguishing what came by permission, and what was inherited from nature. Most characters are too narrow for much variety ; but in him there was room enough for all the changes of feeling, however unlike. My own predominant impression from our years of intercourse, during all of which he was living alone, was that of a man genial, joyous, kind, and of a nature large and generous to excess ; but of a temper so uncontrollably impetuous, and so prone to act from undisciplined impulse, that I have been less startled upon a closer knowledge to find it said by others, unfaltering both in admiration and tried affection for him, that during hardly any part of his life between nine years and almost ninety could he live with other people in peace for any length of time ; for that, though always glad, happy, and good-humored for a while, he was apt gradually to become tyrannical where he had power, and rebellious where he had not ; and I here, therefore, candidly state so much, to be always kept steadily in view, that hereafter there may be less danger of doing unconsciously some injustice to others in the desire to be in all things just to so remarkable a man.

#### VII. BEFORE AND AFTER RUSTICATION.

To the youth who has just left Oxford, and who is still short of his twentieth year, the tone just used may seem to be applied prematurely. But already his character is formed ; even as his handwriting, in this letter written seventy years ago, and now lying before me, is absolutely identical in form, freedom, and decisiveness of outline with that which he wrote nearly seventy years later. And just as in the later time when anything painful had occurred to him, he would fling it aside, and forget it in the writing of a dialogue or poem of which he would set aside the (imaginary) profits for the benefit of somebody or something in distress, he has already, in the interval of five months between his rustication and this letter to Walter Birch, with the same happy power of forgetting what it was not pleasant to remember, gone from his father's house to London, brought out in a volume *The Poems of Walter Savage Landor*,\* devoting all its profits to the benefit of a "distressed clergyman," and, together with his

\* "Printed for T. Cadell, Jun., and W. Davies (successors to John Cadell), in the Strand. 1795."

statement to Birch of the circumstances which had driven him from Trinity College, is now sending him this volume of his poems !

"Dear Birch," he begins,\* "you will be surprised to receive a letter from me, but more so to see my verses in their present form. I confess the truth to you that the letter does not attend *them*, but they the letter ; for I thought I could not have a better opportunity of addressing myself to you than in their company." He had ardently desired to explain to his friend the affair which made him leave Oxford, for he knew very well that enemies on the one side and friends on the other would make the circumstance appear in various and deceitful lights. Birch was not to think, however, that he was going to apologize for himself ; no such thing. His folly appeared more hateful to him than it could to any other person, and he would show it to his friend undisguised.

"In the morning I had been a-shooting ; in the evening I invited a party to wine. In the room opposite there lived a man† universally laughed at and despised ; but I must tell you why he was so, — for we are naturally sorry for such people, and are careful not to increase their misfortunes. With a figure extremely disgusting, he was more so in his behavior. *Plenus ruris et inficetiarum*, he was continually intruding himself where his company was not wanted ; and, hearing others talk of hunting and other diversions, always joined the conversation, and often mistook a laugh for an applause. For the very jokes that were passed on him gratified him highly, and puffed him up with an idea of his own consequence. This was the aim of the college : laughed at first for *his* amusement, and afterwards for our own. We called him 'Duke of' Leeds. Well, it unfortunately happened that he lived opposite to me, and that he had a party on the same day, consisting of servitors and other raffs of every description. The weather was warm, and the windows were open ; the consequence was that those who were in my room began rowing those in his, who very soon retorted. All the time I was only a spectator ; for I should have blushed to have had any conversation with them, particularly out of a window. But my gun was lying on another table in the room, and I had in my back closet some little shot. I proposed, as they had closed the casements, and as the shutters were on the outside, to fire a volley. It was thought a good trick, and accordingly I went into my bedroom and fired. Soon the president sent up a servant to inform me that Mr. Leeds had complained of a gun being fired from the room in which I entertained my company, but he could not tell by whom ; so that he insisted on knowing from me, and making me liable to the punishment."

And now arises an illustration of character. In the circumstances stated there was manifestly no escape with honor except by frank confession ; but knowing the consequence that must follow, its possible effect upon his father flashed suddenly on Landor, and, with the swift transition to extremes which was a part of his nature, he thought it on the instant worth any sacrifice not to embitter past

\* The letter is dated from 38 Beaumont Street, Portland Place, 12th April, 1795.

† It will be observed that to Birch he says nothing of the man's Tory opinions, Birch himself having a leaning that way.



hope those home disagreements of which ordinarily he was careless enough. His eager desire of the moment shut out everything but the one opportunity of evasion, which he hurriedly seized. He assured the president that no gun was fired from the rooms in which his company were (he had fired it from the bedroom); and as his questioner could not identify any person, he did not recognize it as his own duty to reply to a vague charge. The president inquired whether any person had come up the same stairs? Very possibly there might, said Landor. Whether he himself possessed a gun? He did. If the president might see it? Certainly. Had it not been lately fired? Yes. The president then immediately sent for the men who had been in Landor's room. They, knowing he was not likely himself to make any concession, gave discrepant answers; for they were each examined separately and very minutely. Upon this Doctor Chapman sent for Landor again; told him he had received such contradictory evidence that he was determined to persevere till he found out the truth; and suggested that Landor should enable him to deal leniently in the case by himself stating frankly what had occurred. This was extremely generous, Landor admits, and adds that he was foolish in the last degree to refuse it; but he called to mind his own prevarication, and that of his friends, and hastily resolved not to throw any light on the subject. He thought himself under no obligation to reply to a charge that could not be proved, although it was just; and he required Doctor Chapman to try him as he would a criminal. He reminded him of the privileges of a person accused; and that even if a place were improperly specified in an indictment, that alone would discharge the prisoner. But the Doctor did not comprehend this (a wonder if he had); "he chose to examine all the grounds; and if any one of them was sound, it should be enough for him." He proceeded, therefore, and, the various contradictions being compared, the guilt was proved.

Very characteristically Landor continues:—

"I was extremely chagrined. I wrote to the president, and informed him that I only was responsible for the plan I had pursued. I even vastly magnified my fault, and painted my dissimulation in the most odious colors. For, being what I never was guilty of before, it struck me with the greatest horror. You will very likely wonder at the course I took. But the reason why I refused to confess was not on my own account. I imagined that I should certainly be rusticated at all events for firing off a gun in the quadrangle in the time of prayers. I therefore balanced the sorrow I should feel in deceiving the president, with that of irritating a father with whom I was already on the most indifferent terms. I hardly doubted a moment. For though my father had really shown me as much unkindness as was in his power, I was resolved, if possible, not to give him any further cause of complaint. I appeal to Heaven for the purity of my motives, and that they arose not from personal fear. At the same time I confess to you, my dear Birch, that I have committed an action (the prevarication) which I never can forgive. The president knew very well the circumstances in



which I stood; and I really think that he would not have rusticated me, if he had not thought that by going home I should be reconciled the more soon to my father. He wrote a letter for this purpose; and expressed his wishes to me on parting that I should return again to college, and assured me that the whole affair should be forgotten."

Such indeed had been the anxiety of this good Doctor Chapman to treat Landor with excess of lenity, that one of the fellows openly expressed dissatisfaction. The letter to Birch does not at all exaggerate the favorable turn given to the sentence itself, in coupling it, as the dissentient fellow remarked, with "an unexampled formula." "Mr. Landor," said the president, "it is the opinion of the fellows that you be rusticated for two terms, *at the expiration of which I invite you to return.*" And it was upon Landor's nevertheless earnestly entreating that his punishment might be of any other kind, however much severer, in order to save pain to his family, not himself, that Doctor Chapman wrote to his father. But the return home failed to bring about the proper understanding; the Birch letter itself too abundantly explaining why this could not be expected. The sacrifice which the son imagined he had made, was to the father very naturally an aggravation of offence; and it is impossible not to smile at the huffed and haughty tone taken up where entire and sorrowful submission might have seemed but small atonement. The extraordinary ease also with which at last the whole subject is carelessly dismissed will not fail to be observed.

"But my father and I are more different than any other two men. I have endeavored to make the greatest sacrifices to his happiness; but if I cannot make him happy, I certainly will not make him miserable. Because I sent to Oxford to give up my rooms, he imagined that I had no intention of returning. On this he used the most violent expressions, and the event is that I have left him forever. I have been in London about a quarter of a year, constantly employed in studying French and Italian. The former I could read before, but not speak. The latter is extremely easy both to read and speak, and I understand it as well as French, which I have been in the habit of reading four or five years. In about another month I think of going into Italy, — but if the French should take me prisoner, I will enter their harbors singing *ça ira*. I have excellent lodgings here, and nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see you."

He was not, however, to sing *ça ira* as yet, or to embark upon any such exciting adventure as he hints at. He remained a few weeks longer in London, having nothing afterwards to remember more noticeable than an accidental meeting with the son of *Egalité*; \* and while

\* Speaking, in a letter to his sister Elizabeth, of the strong party feeling in Florence after the Three Days' Revolution in France, he describes a dinner at which he had met the Duc de Laval-Montmorency and Talleyrand's nephew, the Duc de Dino, who with infinite care avoided speaking to each other, and adds: "Their new king will, however, reconcile all that are worth reconciliation. He is the best, and almost the wisest, man in his kingdom. I once saw him in London in the year 1795. He was knocking at a door in York Place, where I also had a call to make. He was extremely handsome and thin, which he is no longer, and spoke two or three words in English perfectly

kind friends had been doing their best to heal the difference with his father, he had himself been chiefly and unconcernedly busy about his volume of *Poems*.

### VIII. FIRST PUBLISHED BOOK.

Mr. Robert Landor thus adverts to his brother's first published book in one of his letters to me. "The first of Walter's publications must have appeared almost seventy years ago. A small volume of poems, which were withdrawn or suppressed without any reason as I can remember,\* excepting that he hoped to write better soon. There was nothing among them, I think, discreditable in any way to a man barely twenty years old. But he seems to have wished that they should be forgotten, even before the publication of *Gebir* two or three years later." The wish was a natural one, and it will be found very shortly that Landor himself gives good reasons for it; but a book is as hard to withdraw as to circulate, and there is no rule so common as the rule of contrary in such things. It may be shrewdly suspected that the *Poems* went further than *Gebir* for the very reason that suggested the desire to suppress them. A letter is before me written to Landor from Oxford early in 1795, by one who was already a fellow of his own college of Trinity, in which this remark is made: "For myself, what can I do? You know *nescit vox missa reverti*. But these little things promote the sale of the copies of your volume in the University, so that the booksellers here are at present out of a supply."

The grave, good-natured writer, older than Landor by many years, and to whom a living had just fallen from his college, can thus without anger refer to some lines addressed to Doctor Warton, containing a personal attack on himself which seems to have been altogether wilful and unprovoked:—

"Deign from thy brother's works to cull us  
What bold Lucretius, sharp Catullus,  
Divinely elegant Tibullus,  
And all the grand Aonian quire  
Would envy, or at least admire.  
Then Oxford shall no more regret  
The twofold night 'twixt C—— and K——."

—the offence of Clarke and Kett being explained in a note to have been, that the last had published *Juvenile Poems* at the age of forty, and the first an *Ædipus* in prose. "Ouvrez, Messieurs! c'est mon

well. I did not know who he was until I entered the house, and then I congratulated myself that I had insisted on his entering first,—for I learned that he was so sensible and independent a man that he rather gained his bread by teaching French in two or three distinguished families than accept the two hundred a year which the king of Sardinia offered him. It was a lucky house,—for the Abbé on whom I called was made Bishop of Agen by Bonaparte, though a Christian and a Royalist. I wondered as much at this as he once wondered at me for eating a red herring without mustard and vinegar, *faute de salade*." The kind word for Louis Philippe may fairly stand against many harsh ones uttered in later years.

\* See *post*, p. 81.



Ædipe en prose." The note, however, does not say all. The person with whom Clarke is coupled had done worse than publish *Juvenilia* at forty, having in fact been the solitary dissentient among the fellows of Trinity from Doctor Chapman's good-humored invitation that Landor should return; and to the close of Kett's unhappy life Landor resented this ill word. On the other hand there was no sufficient reason for putting Clarke into the pillory erected in the volume for Kett; and Landor seems himself to have regretted it, when from the letter just quoted he saw how good-naturedly it was taken.

There is no trace of anger in Clarke (for the letter is his); he thinks more of expressing his delight at the poetry and scholarship of the book than of taking offence at its personalities;\* and what he says of various parts of the volume, and in especial of its fifty pages of *Poematum Latinorum Libellus et Latine scribendi Defensio*, testifies strongly now the impression made then upon the Oxford graduates and masters by the powers of this unruly lad of twenty. He thinks that Catullus himself might have been proud of the "Hendecasyllabi"; wishes that courts and courtiers could but be reformed by the political pieces; declares that Persius never excelled the ease and concinnity of his Invocation; † says of a couplet for a Quaker's tankard, —

"Ye lie, friend Pindar! and friend Thales!  
Nothing so good as water? *Ale is!*"

\* "You are somewhat severe," he says, "on my contemporary and fellow-collegian, Mr. Kett, whom you have also made collinear with myself, rather to the diversion of all our friends." He cannot help adding an epigram which had just come out as a reply to Landor: —

"K—— not a poet! who dare say so?  
Though not an Ovid, yet a Naso."

This shows that Kett was not strong in friends, even among men of his own standing. He must have had some merit (he was one year chosen Bampton Lecturer), but nothing he did seems to have been done successfully; and what is said to have induced him finally to commit suicide (not by hanging, as Landor supposed, but drowning) was some formal censure passed upon him in the University.

† This Invocation is noticeable still for the treasonable bitterness of its last couplet, and for its terse summary of the so-called poets whom the general dulness had thrown into prominence since the deaths of Goldsmith and Gray. As yet the voice of Cowper had but faintly been heard; Burns had still to be naturalized to England; while Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb, and Southey were only trying and sounding their instruments in small publications at Bristol.

"Though, Helicon! I seldom dream  
Beside thy lovely limpid stream,  
Nor glory that to me belong  
Or elegance, or nerve of song,  
Or Hayley's easy-ambling horse,  
Or Peter Pindar's comic force,  
Or Mason's fine majestic flow,  
Or aught that pleases one in Crowe:  
Yet thus, a *saucy suppliant* bard,  
I court the Muse's kind regard —  
'O whether, Muse! thou please to give  
My humble verses long to live;  
Or tell me the decrees of Fate  
Have ordered them a shorter date, —  
I bow. Yet O, may every word  
Survive, however, George the Third!"



that he had seen one of the dons laughing over it heartily ; and of another at the hundred and thirty-third page, on Tucker's treatise concerning civil government in opposition to Locke,

"Thee, meek Episcop'y ! shall kings unfrock  
Ere Tucker triumph over sense and Locke !"

averts that he "saw Tucker himself overlooking page 133." This forgiving fellow of Trinity, in short, has only one regret in connection with his assailant, — that he had, owing to some misunderstanding about the letting of his rooms to him at his first entering the college, lost the honor of having Landor for a tenant : "especially as but for that you might now have been a resident amongst us ; and with the pipe of antiquity on which you so sweetly play, directed upwards, you might have charmed any uncouth inhabitant of your zenith, instead of having alarmed the horizon by an instrument placed at right angles with your shoulder."

#### IX. A FAIR INTERCESSOR.

At Warwick meanwhile, as I have said, kind friends were interceding to clear the horizon from any further ill consequence of the alarm to the "uncouth inhabitant" of Trinity ; and now that we are all dead, as Sydney Smith says, the name of one of the intercessors may be singled out.

This was Dorothea Lyttelton, the chosen and particular friend of Landor's eldest sister, Elizabeth ; who lived with her two rich bachelor uncles at Studley Castle, fourteen miles from Warwick and adjoining Ipsley Court ; who was known to be not only heiress to both uncles, but already to possess in her beauty a more enviable dowry ; whom everybody for miles about naturally was in love with ; and who had not yet smiled on any of those countless suitors, though youths of all but the highest rank were said to be among them. The whole of the brothers Landor she of course led captive ; and a tale is told of the youngest, that when two or three years hence she had relented and was a bride,\* and he, a lad of fifteen, had gone into her presence bent upon slaying her bridegroom in single combat with spears or bows and arrows, she suddenly, to his extreme mortification, displaced those desperate thoughts by taking him in her arms and kissing him. We may gather at least from the story what the family intimacy with Miss Lyttelton was ; and we have proof that an elder brother had been more presuming. "I ought to remember well that name, and little notes to my sister subscribed D. Lyttelton," wrote Landor

\* Almost as I write these words the papers announce the death of this lady's son. "We regret to announce the decease of Sir Francis Goodricke, Bart., at Malvern. Born in November, 1797, he was the eldest son of Francis Holyoake, Esq., of Tettenhall in Staffordshire, and Studley Castle, Warwickshire, by Dorothy Elizabeth, niece and heiress of Philip Lyttelton, Esq., of Studley Castle. He was member for Stafford in 1835 : was afterward returned for South Staffordshire ; in 1834, filled the office of high-sheriff of Warwickshire ; and in 1835 was created a baronet."

to me in his eightieth year, correcting Leigh Hunt's spelling of the name in his book about Kensington. "The estate of Studley Castle joined Ipsley Court, and there dwelt one whom Lady Hertford, the best judge of beauty in the world, called the most lovely and graceful creature she had ever known. Every day of the vacations I went over there. It soon was *Walter* and *Dorothea*; her uncles, too, called me Walter, and liked me heartily; and if I had then been independent, I should have married this lovely girl." Tales told by hope are often too flattering, but we have better means than usual of judging whether it was so here. Among his papers I found a packet of her letters carefully kept and indorsed by him, addressed to him at his London lodgings in Beaumont Street in those early months of 1795; and there will be now no breach of confidence in admitting the reader to some glimpses of them.

The first shows her very anxious about his sister Elizabeth, with whom she has been passing some days, when "she talked of you to me, and distresses herself more than you can imagine." He had been their constant theme. To talk about him was the only consolation for his absence, which had diminished the happiness of her own visit to Warwick. Never, she prays him, is he to be so cruel to her "nice little friend Elizabeth" as not to correspond with her. The omission was promptly repaired; and in her next letter she tells him how he had charmed his sister by writing to her, "and me by the compliment of attending to my request! She wrote to me in ecstasies."

Then there is a question as to some promise about *a bit of ribbon* he has charged her with having broken; but she will not regret an apparent forgetfulness that has proved his remembrance of her, and gratified her vanity by convincing her that the insignificance of a bit of ribbon may derive worth from *her* presenting it to him. At once, upon having his letter, she had sent to her "friend citizenne Johnstone, who is now at that metropolis of dissension and aristocracy, Birmingham," to procure her the colors; and — would he believe it! — the citizenne has sent a light blue instead of a dark purple! But really it is the ignorance that has angered her more than the delay; for, "to say the truth, I cannot think you mean in earnest I should pack off two or three bits of ribbon those number of miles! If I am mistaken, it rests with you to rectify it; and, upon demand, here will be the real colors to tie up for your watch-chain." This demand of course came, and the bits of ribbon went.

There is next the arrival of the *Poems*; which she sits up reading till one o'clock in the morning, and then cannot "compose herself to sleep" till she has told him what "exquisite delight" they had given her; and not the printed book only, but verses in manuscript! and lines addressed to herself! How is she to find words to thank him; and ought she indeed to thank him for making her inordinately vain! But what a talent it is! and, when existing with a disposition equally



happy, how great the power it gives its possessor to oblige all whom he may honor with the name of friend ! “These verses, how I could talk of them ! What I have, I can repeat as fluently as the author himself, and am longing for my memory to be further charged.” She had only to continue to long until the next post ; which conveyed to her the proof of what her following letter expressed in thanking him, that her wish was become a command.

If additional evidence were wanting, however, to show in all that has thus been quoted but the friendly familiarity of a good-humored girl for the brother of her friend, a year or two younger than herself, whose cleverness she admired and whose attentions pleased her, the other contents of that last-named letter would supply it. She had been told of his intention, already named to Walter Birch, to betake himself to Italy ; and not content with a vehement disapproval of this plan, she bestirs herself on the instant with much zeal to prevent it.

She begins by thanking him for having taken so much trouble to explain his situation, for to talk of himself is more interesting to her than any other subject. They had already heard at Studley of the unfortunate misunderstanding between him and his father, and hoped it might be reconciled. But now she must tell him that she is in a humor to preach a little to him. Is he disposed to profit by a lecture ? He will say she is determined to disapprove of all his schemes ; but against this journey to Italy she must loudly exclaim, as she would also against any other as distant. There she is decided. “I would have people with superior worth and abilities stay and distinguish themselves where example, in most wise and good things, is so much wanting. I really do not see,” she continued, proceeding to lay all the blame on the French Revolution, though as wise and gentle a monitor might to the very close of his life have applied the words she is using now at its beginning : “I do not see why you should be so disgusted with people in general of your own country, when to my certain knowledge you have more than your share of friends. But this vile party political work which now rages through the whole world destroys all happiness both domestic and public,—and I think we must all soon be of one opinion as to that.”

In any case, however, he must not go to Italy. In a previous letter she had named her uncles to him as very much on his side, and as having desired her to mention them to him as his sincere friends ; and now that this project has been told to them, they are quite as eager as herself to prevent it. Hence, what she will now propose ; and see with what a delightful energy she does it,—being nothing less than determined that it *shall be* !

“I have a thousand things to say to you from my uncles. They talk of you much, and are ready to be mediators between you and your father. Let me then beg of you to consider on what terms and with what inducements you can be tempted to give up this voyage. Propose them to me,



and I will commit them to my uncles; one of whom will make such proposals to your father as coming from themselves. I assure you they are bent upon restoring peace and content to you; and if they can serve you, *do* gratify their wish! Recollect in the course of nine months you will be of age. You will then have it in your power to increase your income if you do but approve of those only means to do it. *Till then*, suppose my uncle was to propose your going to Cambridge? And would you agree to giving a security to make amends to the younger part of the family if your father would allow you enough to support you in studying the law at the Temple? or living independent anywhere else in England? For I find the truth is, he cannot allow you sufficient to study the law without injuring his younger children. Three hundred a year my uncles talk of. Now this is really coming to the point. Not merely saying *don't go*, but thinking of what you are to do if you stay. Let me entreat you, then, to tell me the terms on which you will give up this melancholy scheme. Do lay them down to me, and I will acquaint my uncles of them. Nay, write to one of them yourself! Or, will you come down and stay a little while with them, and talk over schemes and projects to restore your happiness in England? I do hope sincerely you will take time to try if you do not find it *sufferable* to stay. Give it up till you are of age merely, and then determine! What can you do in Italy? *I quite depend* upon your making me your confidante, and that I shall hear from you immediately. I will attend at all times to anything that will serve you."

There is something extremely touching in all this pretty, persistent, feminine earnestness for the youth so wayward and self-willed, who had yet the qualities to inspire such sisterly attachment and interest as are manifest in every line she writes. Nothing more of the correspondence is preserved; but immediately after the last letter reached Landor, he quitted London for Tenby in South Wales, and his having accepted the proposed mediation is to be inferred from the fact that it shortly afterwards took place, and the arrangement ultimately made for his living away from Warwick was founded upon it.

The notion as to Cambridge, and the plan for reading law at the Temple, were rejected; but a fixed yearly sum, about half of what his eager advocate suggested, was set apart for his use, with the understanding that his father's house was at all times open to him in aid of this allowance, for as much of the year as he chose to live in it. And so for that time there was a surrender of the flight to Italy, which had carried dismay to at least another female heart, humbler though perhaps not less true than Dorothea Lyttelton's. "Hon<sup>red</sup> Sir," wrote the servant who had nursed him in his infancy, "May Health and Happiness attend you, and may I Live to see you at the Head of that Family who, next to a Husband, as my Best Affections. I hope the providence of God will direct you in Every thing, but, O Sir, I hope you will Never go a Broad. My hart shuders at the thout of your Leaving England Least I shud see you no more." The letter, addressed to him at Tenby in the August of 1795, I found among Landor's papers at his death with his indorsement, "*Mary Bird* —

*my nurse.*" She had married shortly before,\* a present he then sent her now forming her apology for writing to him; and this small niche in his story may be fairly given to so old a friend of his family, whose return of the affection she bore them has record in a tablet placed to her memory in Warwick Church by Henry Landor.

## X. A MORAL EPISTLE.

While he had thus been waiting to decide upon his future career, however, his letters to his interesting correspondent had not filled up all his time. Some weeks before he quitted London there came forth from the printing-press of Messrs. Cadell and Davies, with no other name on the title-page, a tract of twenty pages in verse, *A Moral Epistle to Earl Stanhope*, of which, from letters addressed to him at Tenby, I lately discovered him to have been the writer. One of its lines indeed avows the authorship. I may not long detain the reader with it; but one or two characteristic points should not be omitted.

The satire, as its title implies, is in the manner of Pope, whose workmanship in some respects it cleverly reproduces. It is an attack upon Pitt; the republican earl being put in contrast with the Tory minister; and its lines best worth recalling are those that denounce the shabby public vices encouraged by Chatham's son, as in him co-existing with private weaknesses, that, for such association in the elder time, nay, even in his father's time, would have been too generous.

"Ah, Bacchus, Bacchus! round whose thyrsus twined  
Tendrils and ivy playing unconfined,  
How art thou altered!"

Not the less now, for the bottle in each hand, did avarice and disingenuousness flourish; not the less did spies abound; and not safer was the confidence because given at the festive hour. One can hardly imagine the lines that follow written by a lad of twenty.

"Yet O the pleasures! when 'mid none but friends  
The trusty secret where it rises ends:  
At which no hireling politician storms,  
No snoring rector catches, and *informs*!  
Now, even Friendship bursts her golden band,  
Kens one with caution ere she shakes one's hand.  
No longer gives she that accustomed zest  
Which made luxurious e'en the frugal feast;  
Nor hold we converse, in these fearful days,  
More than the horses in your lordship's chaise.  
Yet Wine was once almighty! silent Care  
Filled high the bowl, and laughed at poor Despair;

\* "Molly Perry" was the maiden name of this old family servant; and was the name by which very recently, in the crisis of a dangerous illness, Mr. Robert Landor, unconscious for the moment of more than eighty intervening years, called to her, supposing her still to be watching at his bed as in his infancy. Occasionally, also, in letters between him and Walter, the mention of her occurs; and in some amusing comments on the disagreeableness of English hexameters, Robert makes exception for "Sternhold's 104th Psalm as recited by Molly Bird." (August, 1856.)



Wine threw the guinea from the miser's hand,  
 Wine bade his wond'ring heart with alien warmth expand.  
 But — honest minister or sound divine —  
 He lies who tells us now there's truth in wine.  
 For George's premier, never known to reel,  
 Drinks his two bottles, Bacchus! at a meal."

There is another passage, in which the shoulder of mutton of honest Marvell is hashed once more for downright Shippen, whom Walpole has visited in the hope of corrupting : —

" ' Boy,' quoth Shippen, ' pray  
 What will thy master dine upon to-day? '  
 ' Sir? Mutton, sir! ' ' Speak boldly; why abasht?  
 Drest in what manner? ' ' Please your honor, hasht.' "

— all of which is excellent, though only these lines may be given. But an extract from a note to them is also worth giving, to show the readiness with which he used his learning; how intimately it was a part of himself even at this boyish time; and how early had begun those applications of it which habit, making more and more easy to him, made finally a second nature. The note tells us something, too, of his opinions of the people's representatives in those days, and as to the need that existed for reform.

Remarking that Walpole's court was infamous to a proverb, he says that though comparisons would be odious, a time had very certainly at last arrived among themselves when nearly the whole of their worthy representatives might join the chorus in Sophocles : —

ὅδ' ἐστὶν ἡμῶν ναυκράτωρ ὁ παῖς · ὅς' ἂν  
 οὗτος λέγῃ σοι, ταῦτά σοι χῆμείς φάμεν.

They might sing, in other words, " This youth here is our pilot, and whatever he tells you we also say " : a song unlike that later one in which " the pilot " Pitt appeared, but in an odd kind of way, of which Landor is wholly unconscious, seeming to prefigure it. He goes on to say that Sophocles often is a satirist; that if he had lived in England he would most surely have had his windows broken for freedom of speech; and that it is a great pity, in so immense a web of scholia as that which is entangled round him, not to be able to distinguish the characters he seems to have attacked.

" The critics never observed that Sophocles joined politics to poetry; otherwise they certainly would have taken the pains to illustrate, as they went, the most striking characters of a most eventful age. This reflection led me to another, — which is, that nothing would be more proper than that to every town which had representatives there should every month be sent an account how they act. This account should be repositied in some place of safety, where the constituents might refer to it whenever they please. They could then be no longer deceived; and if there existed any undue influence, it would be their own fault. Even this, however, would be nugatory, unless the bill passes for a more general reform."

So sweeping a reformer indeed was the ardent young poet, that, not content with addressing his Epistle to Lord Stanhope, and with



declaring repeatedly that he despises the title as much as he admires the virtue of so distinguished a patriot, he thinks it necessary also to prefix a prose dedication in which he is "bold enough to assert" that when Fortune placed on the brow of Lord Stanhope the tinsel coronet for the civic wreath, she must have been either more blind or more insulting than usual. For himself, she had nothing to give, because there was nothing he would ask. He would rather have an executioner than a patron.

The remark no doubt expresses very exactly the feeling with which Landor awaited at Tenby the result of the intercession with his father.

## XI. RETREAT TO WALES.

In the later memory of Landor the various matters consequent on his departure from Oxford continued to live only confusedly; and at the time of his letter to me in 1855 he had the belief that Dorothea Lyttelton's intercession had obtained for him a separate allowance of four hundred a year, though his own non-compliance with certain conditions compelled him to surrender it. Her letters will not only have shown how such errors may have found place in his mind, but will account for sundry statements naturally repeated since his death because put forth with his authority while he lived; and in order to explain the interesting comment which these have received from Mr. Robert Landor, of whom I had inquired respecting them before Miss Lyttelton's letters were found, their substance shall here be briefly stated.

They are to this effect: That Landor, after he left Oxford, was looking out for a profession. That his godfather, General Powell, with whom upon leaving Oxford he lived in London, promised that he would obtain for his godson a commission in the army if the young republican would keep his opinions to himself. That Landor replied he would suppress his opinions for no man, and declined the offer. That his father then promised him four hundred a year if he would study for the law, and only a hundred and fifty a year if he would not. But that, the law being less to Landor's taste than the army, after a brief residence in London he put the Severn Sea between him and his friends, and retired into Wales.

As for Landor looking out for a profession, this was certainly never at any time the case. The earlier home disagreements and objections turned chiefly upon this, that he as decidedly refused as his father eagerly desired to give such a direction to his studies as might also give purpose to his life and steadiness to his habits, — "settle him down to something," as the saying is. But, even by the time of the Oxford rustication, Doctor Landor had come to see pretty clearly that his eldest son was just as likely to qualify himself for a curacy or rectory as for a lawyer's wig, for a bishop as for a judge, or for a Quaker as for either. "General Powell," Mr. Robert Landor tells me, "my

brother's godfather, never did live in London, nor did my brother ever live with him anywhere else. The general's house and constant residence was at Warwick, till, a great many years later, he became Lieutenant-Governor of Gibraltar. There were five or six old officers at that time resident in Warwick, but none so familiar with my father as General Powell. He had served in Canada during the American War; and, enjoying an ample fortune, at the peace returned to Warwick, his native town, as an unmarried sportsman. When not otherwise engaged, he spent his evenings with us; a cheerful, good-humored old soldier, with very gentlemanly manners which never changed. . . . While Walter was a boy, the old general laughed at such extravagance as his wish that the French would invade England and assist us in hanging George the Third between two such thieves as the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.\* But at a later age military men could not be so tolerant; and, therefore, rather than quarrel, the general hardly ever spent his evenings in my father's house when Walter was there. According to the accounts you send me, General Powell had offered a commission in his regiment to Walter, which was declined. The general would have thought him as well qualified for the chaplaincy. *Such an offer was made to my brother Charles*; but at that time Walter never entered the general's house, though so near, and the general very seldom entered our father's. More than twenty years later I prevailed on Walter to call on General Powell, then very old and almost dying, at Clifton. Every trace of ill-feeling was forgotten on both sides; but I doubt whether, during those twenty years, they had seen each other. There was, however, another military proposal of which my brother never heard one word. The Warwickshire Militia, assembled at Warwick, had for its colonel the Marquis of Hertford, and for its lieutenant-colonel a Colonel Packwood, also one of my father's friends. On one occasion, when I think that I was present, Colonel Packwood related to my father the resignation of some young officer through ill-health. My father may have hoped that the unsettled and restless habits of his son would perhaps be corrected, if employment could be found for him among many older persons from the best county families. He asked Colonel Packwood whether he thought that Lord Hertford would give Walter the vacant appointment? Colonel Packwood promised to report my father's wishes to the marquis. A few days after, when they met again, my father asked whether the application had been made; to which the colonel said that it had not been made by him; for that at the mess after dinner, when talking about the vacancy, he had mentioned my father's wish and his own

\* The memory of my correspondent goes so far back as even to recall the occasion when he and his brothers and sisters, sitting in their mother's room, not only heard this pious wish, but saw Mrs. Lander rise immediately from her seat, and box Walter's ears from behind. They were all terrified at Walter, wondering what he might do; when they heard their mother's high-heeled shoes clattering quickly over the margin of the uncarpeted oak near the door, and saw her neat little figure suddenly disappear. "I'd advise you, mother," shouted Walter after her, "not to try that sort of thing again!"



belief that the marquis would readily comply with it ; whereupon one of the officers present immediately objected to my brother's violent and extreme opinions, exclaiming, ' If young Walter Landor gets a commission, I will resign mine ' ; and this resolution being confirmed for similar reasons by every one present, nothing more could be done. I do not believe that Walter ever heard of it, or the contempt which he always so loudly expressed for the Warwickshire gentry might be accounted for."

This last anecdote dates, of course, a little later than the time now engaging us ; and is inserted, as it was written, to illustrate those exaggerated peculiarities of temperament which unexplained would make inexplicable Landor's whole career ; which gave his opinions a tone of offence that not all the eloquent ability he maintained them with could allay ; which put him in the wrong when the right was most upon his side ; and, involving him in unmeaning quarrels, left him both in youth and age to the loneliness and isolation of which he at once boasted and complained. A lively lady who both liked and admired him said to me in his later life that the great enjoyment of walking out with him had only one drawback, that he was always knocking somebody down. She meant this mostly by way of metaphor ; but her objection was the same as that of his soldier-contemporaries, except that there was less of the metaphor in it then. The young officers of the Warwickshire Militia were infinitely his inferiors doubtless, and in everything might have learned from him, as they would also gladly have been taught, with a little help from better manners. How often has the truth to be repeated which Burke urged on Barry, that it is the interest of all of us to be at peace with our fellow-creatures far less for their sakes than for our own, and that the only qualities to carry us safely through life are moderation and gentleness, not a little indulgence to others, and a great deal of distrust of ourselves.

As to the allowance finally agreed to be given until the family estates should descend to him, Mr. Robert Landor remarks that, besides the kind welcome at his father's house when the moderate income was expended, the £150 finally agreed to " had many small additions as our mother could spare them through her own self-denial in all ways. The three younger sons were maintained on three hundred a year, as they could live also, as Walter did, with their father when their money was spent, in other words for about half the year ; and our father had three daughters at that time utterly dependent on an entailed income really, though not nominally, less than £1,800 a year." Nor can I consent to withhold any part of what is said on this subject by Mr. Landor in another letter. " With six younger children, for four of whom there was no provision " (Charles being promised the rectory of Colton of which the patronage belonged to his father, and Henry having the bequest of a small estate at Whitnash), " our mother's cares were confined to her family during many

years. And when she afterwards had less need of economy, the same early prudence was become habitual, and there was the appearance of too much parsimony. But it was never for herself. Under the guidance of my brother Henry, who managed her affairs, she would give as much to any of her children as was consistent with justice to the rest. Parting all she had among them, it was sometimes easier to get from her a hundred pounds than ten shillings. An anxious rather than a fond parent, she was scrupulously just. Though secretly pleased by any commendations bestowed upon her eldest son, she cared less about his literary reputation than about the holes in his shoes and stockings, — a very constant grievance for which she thought herself in some degree responsible. If you feel tired of such silly trash, remember that it is intended by me to mark the distinction between two characters so nearly related and yet so extremely unlike. This brother Henry, who was the family adviser and manager, would never accept any share in the common property, or any bequest from his mother or sisters, but always transferred his rights to nephews and nieces. Here is another contrast of which I will say no more."

When absent from Warwick during the next three years, Landor seems to have been almost wholly at Tenby or Swansea. That this interval could not in any prudent or worldly sense have been very profitable to him, what has been said will sufficiently have shown; and a part of it, including a love adventure that began at the former place, was probably also painful. It is not necessary, however, that this should be dwelt upon; and Landor himself, with the same resolute will that could turn aside from pain as well as pleasure where either might have overwhelmed another man, was able very speedily to forget it. One thing nevertheless is to be said of these three years, that in the course of them his mind had passed through a discipline which from its previous studies or emotions it had failed to acquire; that during them he appears to have read more steadily and persistently than at any former time; and that he printed at the close of them, when he had scarcely passed his twenty-second year, a poem which has only hitherto wonderfully attracted the few as it has decisively repelled the many, but which in my judgment is yet sure of taking admitted rank, if not in this in some other generation, with those few productions of the highest class, which, however wanting in completeness of structure or finish in all their parts, contain writing that will perish only with the language.

"When I began to write *Gebir*," he wrote to me in 1850, "I had just read Pindar a second time and understood him. What I admired was what nobody else had ever noticed, — his proud complacency and scornful strength. If I could resemble him in nothing else, I was resolved to be as compendious and exclusive." But besides Pindar he read again in these years Homer and the Tragedians; and what for the purpose in hand was far more important, he



had finally laid Pope aside and betaken himself to Milton. He has described the time in one of his Conversations. "My prejudices in favor of ancient literature began to wear away on *Paradise Lost*, and even the great hexameter sounded to me tinkling when I had recited aloud, in my solitary walks on the sea-shore, the haughty appeal of Satan and the repentance of Eve." \* In such walks for the most part, and under such influences, *Gebir* was composed; and it was probably no mere illusion of his fancy which led him to say repeatedly in after life that he was never happier than when thus writing it, and not exchanging twelve sentences with men. Copper-works had not, as yet, quite filled the woods around Swansea among which he lived; and he might take his daily walks, as he has himself described them, over sandy sea-coast deserts covered with low roses only and thousands of nameless flowers and plants, and with nothing save occasional prints of the naked feet of the Welsh peasantry to give token of the neighborhood of any human creatures. Hardly human indeed, in their savagery in those days, were the lower orders of the Welsh. The English visitor might have some excuse for regarding them as only something a very little higher than the animals. They were as much mere adjuncts to his landscape as its stranded boats or masses of weed.

This then will be the time, without stopping to speak of the visits Landor meanwhile made to his father's house at Warwick, to offer such detailed account of what he thus achieved as may be necessary to explain the language applied to it; and justify an appeal to readers, who have probably never heard its name, to redress at last the indifference of more than seventy years, and place *Gebir* in the rank of English poetry to which of right it belongs.

The accident which led him to the subject selected I have often heard him relate. He was on friendly terms with some of the family of Lord Aylmer, who were staying in his neighborhood, and one of the young ladies lent him a book, by a now forgotten writer of romances, from the Swansea circulating library. Clara Reeve was the author; but Landor, confusing in his recollection a bad romance writer with a worse of the same sex, thought it was that sister of Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble who lived in the small Welsh town, and wrote under the name of Anne of Swansea. Few of my readers will have heard her name, and I may warn them all against her books, which are mere nonsensical imitations of Mrs. Radcliffe; but Clara Reeve had really some merit, though not discoverable in the particular book lent to Landor. He found it to be a history of romance, having no kind of interest for him until he came at its close to the description of an Arabian tale. This arrested his fancy, and yielded him the germ of *Gebir*. More than sixty years later he wrote to me from Bath (30th November, 1857) that he had just discovered and sent to a lady living near him, also of that Aylmer family, a little

\* *Imag. Conv.* Landor and the Abbé De Lille.

poem called *St. Clair*, written all those years ago for her who thus lent him the book.

One of his critics afterwards charged him with having stolen his story, and merely imitated Milton in telling it. On both points light will be thrown by what I am about to say. He was now to quit the levels, and rise to the heights, of English verse; and to this extent he had profited by his recent study of Milton. But that was the whole of his present debt to the incomparable master; and whether to anybody his Muse owed anything whatever for the story in which she was to find herself involved, the reader very shortly will be able to determine.



## BOOK SECOND.

1797-1805. ÆT. 22-30.

### AUTHORSHIP OF GEBIR, AND EARLIEST FRIENDSHIPS.

- I. Gebir. — II. Some Opinions of Gebir. — III. Doctor Parr. — IV. Attack of the *Monthly Review*. — V. Sergeant Rough. — VI. Corresponding with Parr and Adair. — VII. At Paris in 1802. — VIII. Poetry by the Author of Gebir. — IX. Walter Birch; and Succession to Family Estates.

#### I. GEBIR.

It is easier to laugh at a thing than to take the trouble to comprehend it; and when the *Quarterly Review* said, a good many years ago, that *Gebir* was a poem it did any man credit to have understood, there was more in the saying than its author meant. He was not himself entitled to the credit, though he might have won it with a little pains.

The intention of the poem is, by means of the story of Gebir and his brother Tamar, to rebuke the ambition of conquest, however excusable its origin, and to reward the contests of peace, however at first unsuccessful. Gebir is an Iberian prince, sovereign of Bætic Spain,\* whose conquest of Egypt, undertaken to avenge the wrongs and assert the claims of his ancestors, is suspended through his love for its young Queen Charoba, by the treachery of whose nurse he is nevertheless slain amid the rejoicings of his marriage feast. Tamar is a shepherd youth, the keeper of his brother's herds and flocks, by whom nothing is so eagerly desired as to conquer to his love one of the sea-nymphs whom at first he vainly contends with, but who, made subject to mortal control by the superior power of his brother, yields to the passion already inspired in her, and carries Tamar to dwell with her forever beyond the reach of human ambitions.

Fanciful and wild in its progress as the Arabian tale that suggested it, there is yet thus much purpose in the outline of *Gebir*; but its merit lies apart from intention or construction, and will be found in the passion and intellect pervading it everywhere, in its richness of detail and descriptive power. Style and treatment constitute the charm of it. The vividness with which everything in it is presented to sight as well as thought, the wealth of its imagery, its marvels of language, — these are characteristics pre-eminent in *Gebir*. In

\* From Gebir we are to suppose Gibraltar to be derived, after the fashion of the Teucro-Latin names in Virgil.

the treatment, never abruptly contrasted, natural and supernatural agencies are employed with excellent art; and everywhere as real to the eye as to the mind are its painted pictures, its sculptured forms, and the profusion of its varied but always thoughtful emotion.

These qualities I shall exhibit in describing the seven books, containing nearly two thousand lines, that tell the story; and my extracts will also show the sweetness of the verse, which, though with occasional want of variety in modulation, is to a remarkable degree both energetic and harmonious. I shall quote from it at unusual length; not only because it is unknown to the present reading generation, but because no description without such assistance could account for the effect produced by it upon a few extraordinary men. The mark it made in Landor's life will constantly recur; and of the manner in which his genius affected his contemporaries, not by influencing the many, but by exercising mastery over the few who ultimately rule the many, no completer illustration could be given.

The love inspired in the brothers respectively finds expression in the First Book, which opens with the invasion of Egypt by Gebir in redemption of an oath sworn to his father, to satisfy his dead ancestors and revenge primeval wrongs. In the fourth line is one of those touches which are frequent in the poem, and proof of high imagination; where a single epithet conveys to the mind the full impression which the sense would receive from detailed presentment of the objects sought to be depicted. The "dark helm" covers the crowd of invading warriors.

"He blew his battle horn, at which uprose  
Whole nations; here, ten thousand of most might  
He called aloud; and soon Charoba saw  
His dark helm hover o'er the land of Nile."

The young queen in her terror seeks Dalica her nurse, who reassures her, tells her the invader shall be destroyed, and instructs her, instead of flying from him, to go to his tents and use persuasion to induce him, in honor of his ancestors, to rebuild the city which had once been theirs.

"But Gebir, when he heard of her approach,  
Laid by his orb'd shield; his vizor-helm,  
His buckler, and his corslet he laid by,  
And bade that none attend him; at his side  
Two faithful dogs that urge the silent course,  
Shaggy, deep-chested, croucht; the crocodile,  
Crying, oft made them raise their flaccid ears  
And push their heads within their master's hand.\*  
There was a brightening paleness in his face,  
Such as Diana rising o'er the rocks  
Showered on the lonely Latmian; on his brow  
Sorrow there was, yet naught was there severe.  
But when the royal damsel first he saw,

\* Among Landor's papers I found a list, prepared by himself, of resemblances to passages of his own writing to be found in Scott's *Tales of the Crusaders*. There were several from *Gebir*, and among them that of Cœur de Lion's hound "thrusting his long rough countenance into the hand of his master." The poem had made a great impression on Scott, who read it at Southey's suggestion.



Faint, hanging on her handmaid, and her knees  
 Tottering, as from the motion of the car,  
 His eyes lookt earnest on her, and those eyes  
 Showed if they had not that they might have loved,  
 For there was pity in them at that hour."

After the interview the prince seeks Tamar, intending to speak of the passion that has taken possession of him, when he is surprised by a confidence which anticipates his own, and has to listen first to Tamar's confession. The shepherd youth's description of the sea-nymph — a powerful, impulsive, yet submissive creature of the elements, with large supernatural strength taming itself to little natural human ways — is perfect in every detail to the old Greek fancy. In the picture of her dress are two lines,

" Her mantle showed the yellow samphire-pod,  
 Her girdle the dove-colored wave serene,"

which I quote that I may connect with them a characteristic trait of the writer, who told me once that he had never hesitated more about a verse than in determining whether the mantle or the girdle was to be dove-colored; his doubts having arisen, after he had written the lines, on recollecting from the great Lucretius that the Roman ladies wore a vest of the same description, — *teriturque thalassina vestis Assidue*, &c.

A prize to be contended for had been proposed between Tamar and the nymph. She has nothing of equal worth to one of his sheep to offer; but — she tells him, in a passage which has become one of the glories of our language,\* and which it is impossible even to transcribe

\* I quote from one of Landor's letters to me. "It was my practice, as you know from *Gebir*, to try my hand at both Latin and English where I had been contented with any passage in one. In *Gebir* there are a few which were written first in Latin. The *Shell* was one of these. Poor *Shell*! that Wordsworth so pounded and flattened in his marsh it no longer had the hoarseness of a sea, but of a hospital." Not without reason he had been irritated by a critic who rebuked Lord Byron for naming *Gebir* as the source from which he had drawn a passage in his *Island*; this unlucky critic, after informing the noble poet that his original was not in Landor, but in an "exquisite passage" by Mr. Wordsworth, having proceeded to quote the lines from the *Excursion* in which, like Byron, Wordsworth had copied Landor, but, unlike Byron, without confessing it.

" I have seen  
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell  
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
 Listened intensely, and his countenance soon  
 Brightened with joy; for murmuring from within  
 Were heard sonorous cadences! whereby,  
 To his belief, the monitor expressed  
 Mysterious union with its native sea."

I will add the passage of the nobler original as it appears in the Latin *Gebirus*. It may, indeed, be doubted whether the English or the Latin is most perfect.

" At mihi cæruleæ sinuosa foramina conchæ  
 Obvolvunt, lucemque intus de sole biberunt,  
 Nam crevère locis ubi porticus ipsa palatî  
 Et quâ purpureâ medius stat currus in undâ,  
 Tu quate, somnus abit: tu lævia tange labella  
 Auribus attentis, veteres reminiscitur ædes,  
 Oceanusque suus quo murmure murmurat illa."

without something of the pleasure that must have attended its conception :—

“ But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue  
Within, and they that lustre have imbibed  
In the sun's palace-porch, where when unyoked  
His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave:  
Shake one, and it awakens; then apply  
Its polisht lips to your attentive ear,  
And it remembers its august abodes,  
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.”

The conflict or wrestling-match that follows is intensely Greek in the manner of the narration, and simple even to rudeness; but they who would turn it into ridicule will find more abounding opportunity for the same kind of mirth in the idyls of Theocritus and the descriptions of the Odyssey. In the contest the nymph is victor, and leaves Tamar; but

“ More of pleasure than disdain  
Was in her dimpled chin and liberal lip,  
And eyes that languisht, lengthening, just like love. . . .  
Restless then ran I to the highest ground  
To watch her; she was gone; gone down the tide;  
And the long moonbeam on the hard wet sand  
Lay like a jasper column half upheared.”

As the brothers take their way to the camp, Gebir confesses in turn his love for Charoba, and his resolve for her to forego his native country and resuscitate in Egypt, the city of his ancestors. The Second Book shows this labor in progress.

“ The Gadite men the royal charge obey.  
Now fragments weighed up from the uneven streets  
Leave the ground black beneath; again the sun  
Shines into what were porches, and on steps  
Once warm with frequentation; clients, friends,  
All morning; satchelled idlers all midday;  
Lying half up and languid though at games.”

Slowly the buried city emerges; its masses of stone and marble green with the growth of centuries; and its pavements painted with flowers and figures, which, as water is flung on them, start fresh to view.

“ Here arches are discovered; there huge beams  
Resist the hatchet, but in fresher air  
Soon drop away: there spreads a marble squared  
And smoothened; some high pillar for its base  
Chose it, which now lies ruined in the dust.  
Clearing the soil at bottom, they espy  
A crevice; and, intent on treasure, strive  
Strenuous, and groan, to move it: one exclaims:  
‘I hear the rusty metal grate; it moves!’  
Now, overturning it, backward they start,  
And stop again, and see a serpent pant,  
See his throat thicken, and the crisped scales  
Rise ruffled, while upon the middle fold  
He keeps his wary head and blinking eye,  
Curling more close and crouching ere he strike.  
Go, mighty men, invade far cities, go,  
And be such treasure portions to your heirs.”



Portents of a more terrible kind succeed. Six days' labor had seemed to bring the end within reach, when, on the seventh day, what was done is found undone, and everything restored to what it had been. Gebir is pierced with sorrow, for he sees that other than mortal hands are raised against him; and, calling together his followers, he bids them supplicate the Gods. Southey thought no English poetry presented anything so Homeric as the passage that succeeds. It would be difficult certainly to imagine a finer image than its closing personification of prayers:—

“Swifter than light are they, and every face,  
Though different, glows with beauty; at the throne  
Of Mercy, when clouds shut it from mankind,  
They fall bare-bosomed, and indignant Jove  
Drops at the soothing sweetness of their voice  
The thunder from his hand.”

But here prayers are vain; and Gebir, believing it now to be some secret power that opposes him other than that of the Gods, hopes that, by subduing to his will the sea-nymph beloved by Tamar, he may obtain the secret from her. He seeks her, dressed as his brother, passing through the woodland to the sea:—

“And as he passes on, the little hinds  
That shake for bristly herds the foodful bough,  
Wonder, stand still, gaze, and trip satisfied:  
Pleased more if chestnut, out of prickly husk  
Shot from the sandal, roll along the glade.”

Upon the sea-nymph, meanwhile, waiting for Tamar, desire has come; and the wings of love, which she held at her will in the former conflict, she has languidly let loose: the prince is victor; and as, after discovery that Gebir has been her antagonist, she cries for Tamar, now eager to declare and enjoy her passion as a human nymph would be timidly to conceal it, he promises again and again to restore to her his brother, if she will but say whose work the ruin is that comes each night upon the city, and from whence are the horrid yells of rapture heard amid its falling walls. Then she:—

“Neither the Gods afflict you, nor the Nymphs.  
Return me him who won my heart, return  
Him whom my bosom pants for, as the steeds  
In the sun's chariot for the western wave. . . .  
Promise me this: indeed I think thou hast,  
But 't is so pleasing, promise it once more.”

He complies; and she tells him then of the demons and incantations that prevail in Egypt, and by what sacrifices he is to appease them. The lines descriptive of the latter have a weird and startling picturesqueness. Upon the site of the ancient city he performs all that is required; and as her last bidding is done, the earth gapes before him, he descends, passes through the darkness, and sees around him the souls of those among his ancestors who had rejoiced in war and conquest, expiating by pains of more or less intensity

their varying lusts of power. This purgatory of conquerors occupies the Third Book, which Landor opens with an aspiration of homage to the greatest of all poets, who like himself had been bred in the country of the Avon:—

“O for the spirit of that matchless man  
Whom Nature led throughout her whole domain,  
While he, embodied, breathed ethereal air!  
Though panting in the play-hour of my youth  
I drank of Avon too, a dangerous draught,  
That roused within the feverish thirst of song,  
Yet never may I trespass o’er the stream  
Of jealous Acheron, nor alive descend  
The silent and unsearchable abodes  
Of Erebus and Night, nor unchastised  
Lead up long-absent heroes into day.”

The supernatural region is at first trod by Gebir fearfully; but when the brave doubt no longer they fear no longer, his name twice called reassures him, and striding on undaunted he is about to speak, when one of the shades, Aroar, who had fought under his forefathers, addresses him:—

“Thou knowest not that here thy fathers lie,  
The race of Sidar; theirs was loud acclaim  
When living, but their pleasure was in war;  
Triumphs and hatred followed: I myself  
Bore, men imagined, no inglorious part;  
The Gods thought otherwise,\* by whose decree  
Deprived of life, and more, of death deprived,  
I still hear shrieking through the moonless night  
Their discontented and deserted shades.”

He describes the various degrees of torment through which their souls can alone hope to rise again purified.

“Yet rather all these torments most endure  
Than solitary pain, and sad remorse,  
And towering thoughts on their own breast o’erturned  
And piercing to the heart—”

for then they have bitter knowledge of the sufferings they had inflicted on earth, and of the worthlessness of the trophies, tributes, and colonies obtained in exchange for them, as they lie listening to the river that rolls past their place of expiation.

\* To the words “the Gods thought otherwise,” a note was appended in the first edition of *Gebir* (1798), which though afterwards withdrawn is sufficiently characteristic to justify its present reproduction. It anticipates by seventy years a sentiment of which the public avowal the other day, in a controversy on the limits of religious thought, excited much warmth of admiration and animadversion. “Let not this be considered,” writes Landor, “as an imitation of the verse *Dīs aliter visum*. There is no great merit in quoting old quotations, however apposite, and I am of opinion that this singular passage has generally been misunderstood. Among all the fooleries which men have combined in their ideas of a deity, can there be a greater than that Gods and mortals have a separate sense of right and wrong? Were it really the case, religious men would become daily less zealous, and the life of the wicked would be but a game of chance. For the virtues of the one party might not stand for virtues; nor the vices of the other be marked for vices. There never was a doctrine more calculated to make the generality of men despond, and to keep them dependent on the δογματουργοί.”



"Not rapid, that would rouse the wretched souls;  
 Not calmly, that might lull them to repose;  
 But with dull weary lapses it upheaved  
 Billows of bale, heard low, yet heard afar."

Beyond this river still move Gebir and his guide, till they come where perpetual twilight broods, "lulled by no nightingale, nor wakened by the shrill lark dewy-winged"; having nevertheless glimpses beyond of those brighter airs

"That scatter freshness through the groves  
 And meadows of the fortunate, and fill  
 With liquid light the marble bowl of Earth."

And here are revealed by Aroar the laws that govern these regions, and the separation effected in them between the wicked and the good, or in other words the ambitious and the peaceful, by means of a flaming arch which once in every hundred years starts back, and, discovering to each state its opposite, shows that the eternal fires which seem intended only to punish the vicious, are giving also verdure and pleasantness to the groves of the blest. Calm pleasures neighbor the majestic pains, as in Wordsworth's later but as noble fancy.

Figures and faces have meanwhile crowded past; the Stuarts, father and son, we may discover among them, and even William the deliverer; but there is one whom Gebir challenges: and with what strong resentment the young poet viewed the obstinate war that George the Third had waged with the revolted colonies of America may be read in this passage. It needs not to say to whom the "eyebrows white and slanting brow" belonged; but I may point out, what was better understood at the date of the poem than it has been since, that the two lines immediately following were intended to turn aside the treasonable reference by raising a confusion in the reader's mind between George the Third and Louis Seize, who so recently had perished by the guillotine:—

"What wretch that nearest us? what wretch  
 Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?  
 Listen! him yonder, who, bound down supine,  
 Shrieks yelling from that sword there engine-hung;  
 He too among my ancestors?' 'O King!  
 Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst  
 Inclement winds blew lightning from northeast.'  
 'He was a warrior then, nor feared the Gods?'  
 'Gebir! he feared the Demons, not the Gods,  
 Though them indeed his daily face adored,  
 And was no warrior; yet the thousand lives  
 Squandered as stones to exercise a sling,  
 And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—  
 O madness of mankind! address, adored!  
 O Gebir! what are men? or where are Gods?'"

But the time has come to reascend to earth; and with groans and tears Gebir has called bitterly to his tortured ancestors as he turns to retrace his way, when suddenly flames environ him, and he

"stands breathless in a ghost's embrace." It is his father; who, for binding him to the vow that had made him invader and exile, was now expiating that guilt.

" ' Rackt on the fiery centre of the sun,  
Twelve years I saw the ruined world roll round.  
Shudder not; I have borne it; I deserved  
My wretched fate; be better thine; farewell.' "

Saddened with the misery he has witnessed, remorseful for the past and doubtful of the future, but with present power over the Egyptians increased by the experience he has undergone, Gebir follows upward his bewildered way till again he finds himself within the tents of his people. They have resumed their labors successfully; but in the court of the young queen there is jealousy and discontent, and in her own breast, as she is told of each new development of the invader's power, fear contends with love.

" Charoba, though indeed she never drank  
The liquid pearl, or twined the nodding crown,\*  
Or, when she wanted cool and calm repose,  
Dreamt of the crawling asp and grated tomb,  
Was wretched up to royalty! "

This is the subject of the Fourth Book. Her wretchedness is im-bittered by the cry raised from the court against the followers of Gebir, which the wiser few, who dare to suggest that invaders may be bringers even of good rather than evil, are at first powerless to resist. The rejoinder to these wiser hopes had an application of wide significance seventy years ago, made to such proposals abundantly in later time.

" ' Build they not fairer cities than our own,  
Extravagant enormous apertures  
For light, and portals larger, open courts  
Where all ascending all are unconfined,  
And wider streets in purer air than ours?  
Temples quite plain with equal architraves  
They build, nor bearing gods like ours imbest.  
O profanation! O our ancestors! ' "

Foremost among the discontented is the queen's nurse Dalica, to whom she cannot bring herself frankly to confess her love, even while she pleads with herself for kindlier consideration to him. But apart from the intriguers in the court, the mass of the people outside have raised a clamorous shout for peace, making common cause with Gebir's followers; and they who would have resisted the invader are overborne. On all sides the demand goes up for an embassy to the tents proposing terms of friendship, and cries of eager joy are heard uniting with the name of Gebir that of their young queen.

" Then went the victims forward crowned with flowers,  
Crowned were tame crocodiles, and boys white-robed  
Guided their creaking crests across the stream.

\* An allusion to Cleopatra's shaking poison into Antony's cup from the crown of flowers in her hair, to cure him of his useless precautions against the fear of poison.



In gilded barges went the female train, . . .  
 Sweet airs of music ruled the rowing palms,  
 Now rose they glistening and aslant reclined,  
 Now they descended and with one consent  
 Plunging, seemed swift each other to pursue,  
 And now to tremble wearied o'er the wave."

A picture follows of the grave invading warriors, in welcome of whom the riotous festivities had broken forth.

"Through all the plains below the Gadite men  
 Were resting from their labor: some surveyed  
 The spacious site ere yet obstructed; walls  
 Already, soon will roofs have interposed;  
 Some ate their frugal viands on the steps  
 Contented; some, remembering home, prefer  
 The cot's bare rafters o'er the gilded dome,  
 And sing (for often sighs too end in song),  
 'In smiling meads how sweet the brook's repose  
 To the rough ocean and red restless sands!'  
 But others trip along with hasty step  
 Whistling, and fix too soon on their abodes;  
 Haply and one among them with his spear  
 Measures the lintel, if so great its height  
 As will receive him with his helm unlowered."

The embassy from Charoba to Gebir, with its message and gifts of peace, next comes upon the scene.

"Meantime, with pomp august and solemn, borne  
 On four white camels tinkling plates of gold,  
 Heralds before and Ethiop slaves behind . . .  
 The four ambassadors of peace proceed.  
 Rich carpets bear they, corn and generous wine,  
 The Syrian olive's cheerful gift they bear,  
 With stubborn goats that eye the mountain-top  
 Askance, and riot with reluctant horn. . . .  
 The king, who sat before his tent, descried  
 The dust rise reddened from the setting sun."

But while friendliest words, and a bidding to the banquet that is to proclaim to the reconciled nations the union of their two monarchs, are laid at Gebir's feet, the nurse Dalica, who had seemed to favor most the projected festivity, has already begun her treacherous enterprise. This is the subject of the Fifth Book. It is not wholly the desire to retain power over her mistress that animates her. She really loves Charoba, and cannot understand the change that the presence of Gebir has wrought in her. The lines following, the reader may be pleased to know, were specially singled out for admiration by Shelley, Humphry Davy, Scott, Charles Lamb, and many remarkable men.

"Past are three summers since she first beheld  
 The ocean; all around the child await  
 Some exclamation of amazement here:  
 She coldly said, her long-lasht eyes abased,  
*Is this the mighty ocean? is this all?*  
 That wondrous soul Charoba once possest,  
 Capacious then as earth or heaven could hold,  
 Soul discontented with capacity,  
 Is gone (I fear) forever. Need I say  
 She was enchanted by the wicked spells

Of Gebir, whom with lust of power inflamed  
The western winds have landed on our coast?  
I since have watcht her in her lone retreat,  
Have heard her sigh and soften out the name . . .”

Gebir, too, has been watched by Dalica; spies set on by her have followed him, and have reported his solitary wanderings and self-communings, even his strange loud laughter and his ghastly smile: until finally his death is resolved on. And for this dread purpose she makes her way to the lonely and deserted ruins of the city of Masar, in which her sister Merthyr, a sorceress and enchantress, practises her foul spells. This was another of the passages which Shelley was never tired of reciting; and certainly in the modulation of the verse, the beauty of the flow and pause in the rhythm, there is what might have satisfied the ear of Milton himself.



“Once a fair city, courted then by kings,  
Mistress of nations, thronged by palaces,  
Raising her head o'er destiny, her face  
Glowing with pleasure and with palms refresht,  
*Now* pointed at by Wisdom or by Wealth,  
Bereft of beauty, bare of ornament,  
Stood, in the wilderness of woe, MASAR.  
Ere far advancing, all appeared a plain;  
Treacherous and fearful mountains, far advanced;  
Her glory so gone down, at human step  
The fierce hyena frightened from the walls  
Bristled his rising back, his teeth unsheathed,  
Drew the long growl and with slow foot retired.”

A recognition takes place between the sisters, and the witch believes that Dalica, tired of the lamps and jewels of a court, has come to close her life in vigils of the moon; until she confesses that the purpose of her visit is to obtain a poisoned robe which she may fling over Gebir at the coming festival, offering homage and giving death. Merthyr eagerly consents; and even Dalica is appalled as she watches her grim enjoyment through each successive stage of horrible preparation, gathering the herbs, mutilating venomous creatures for their poison, and weaving on her spindle the dread dark purple woof.

“Her thus entranced the sister's voice recalled:  
'Behold it here! dyed once again, 't is done.'  
Then Merthyr seized with bare bold-sinewed arm  
The gray cerastes, writhing from her grasp,\*  
And twisted off his horn, nor feared to squeeze  
The viscous poison from his glowing gums . . .  
Together those her scient hand combined . . .  
Which done, with words most potent, thrice she dipt  
The reeking garb; thrice waved it through the air.  
She ceast; and suddenly the creeping wool  
Shrank up with crisped dryness in her hands:  
'Take this,' she cried, 'and Gebir is no more.'”

The Sixth and Seventh Books remain, of which the purpose is to exhibit, in vivid contrast, the happy issue of the love of Tamar and

\* I possess a copy of *Gebir*, in which at these picturesque lines Landor mentions that in this and other matters he had drawn information from the pages (not then appreciated as they ought to have been) of the great traveller Bruce.



the disastrous close of that of Gebir. To Gebir warnings are abroad, —

“With horrid chorus, Pain, Diseases, Death,  
Stamp on the slippery pavement of the proud,  
And ring their sounding emptiness through earth,”

— even while the sea-nymph offers to his brother “the ocean, her, himself, and peace.” On the morning that is to unite them, the very waves over which she is to lead him to her home prefigure the coming happiness.

“The waves beneath in purpling rows, like doves  
Glancing with wanton coyness tow’rd their queen,  
Heaved softly; thus the damsel’s bosom heaves  
When from her sleeping lover’s downy cheek,  
To which so warily her own she brings  
Each moment nearer, she perceives the warmth  
Of coming kisses fanned by playful Dreams.”

His countrymen are watching from the beach (this is very Greek) : —

“But nothing see they, save a purple mist  
Roll from the distant mountain down the shore:  
It rolls, it sails, it settles, it dissolves:  
Then shines the Nymph to human eye revealed,  
And leads her Tamar timorous o’er the waves.  
Immortals crowding round congratulate  
The shepherd . . .”

But even in these hours of supreme joy the evil brooding over his brother shakes the heart of the shepherd prince; and, “leaning o’er the boy beloved,” the morning after their espousals, “in Ocean’s grot, where Ocean was unheard,” the sea-nymph has to kiss his fears away. His grief dispersed, pleasure and strength return; and, as she touches his eyes, the wonders of the watery realm are successively revealed to them : —

“First arose  
To his astonisht and delighted view  
The sacred isle that shrines the queen of love.  
It stood so near him, so acute each sense,  
That not the symphony of lutes alone  
Or coo serene or billing strife of doves,  
But murmurs, whispers, nay the very sighs  
Which he himself had uttered once, he heard.  
Next, but long after and far off, appear  
The cloud-like cliffs and thousand towers of Crete,  
And farther to the right the Cyclades . . .  
He saw the land of Pelops, host of Gods,  
Saw the steep ridge where Corinth after stood  
Beckoning the Ionians with the smiling Arts  
Into her sunbright bay. . . .  
And now the chariot of the Sun descends,  
The waves rush hurried from his foaming steeds,  
Smoke issues from their nostrils at the gate,  
Which, when they enter, with huge golden bar  
Atlas and Calpè close across the sea.”

The Seventh and last Book tells its story in a series of pictures. The first shows the warriors at their games, while

“Others push forth the prows of their compeers,  
And the wave, parted by the pouncing beak,

Swells up the sides and closes far astern:  
 The silent oars now dip their level wings,  
 And weary with strong stroke the whitening wave.  
 Others, afraid of tardiness, return:  
 Now, entering the still harbor, every surge  
 Runs with a louder murmur up their keel,  
 And the slack cordage rattles round the mast."

Gebir is then presented to us:—

"Sleepless with pleasure and expiring fears  
 Had Gebir risen ere the break of dawn,  
 And o'er the plains appointed for the feast  
 Hurried with ardent step: the swains admired  
 What so transversely could have swept the dew!"

Charoba next; a masterpiece of exquisite description:—

"Not thus Charoba: she despaired the day;  
 The day was present; true; yet she despaired.  
 In the too tender and once tortured heart  
 Doubts gather strength from habit, like disease;  
 Fears, like the needle verging to the pole,  
 Tremble and tremble into certainty. . . .  
 Next to her chamber, closed by cedar doors,  
 A bath of purest marble, purest wave,  
 On its fair surface bore its pavement high:  
 Arabian gold enchased the crystal roof,  
 With fluttering boys adorned and girls unrobed;  
 These, when you touch the quiet water, start  
 From their aerial sunny arch, and pant  
 Entangled 'mid each other's flowery wreaths,  
 And each pursuing is in turn pursued.  
 Here came at last, as ever went at morn,  
 Charoba: long she lingered at the brink,  
 Often she sighed, and, naked as she was,  
 Sat down, and leaning on the couch's edge,  
 On the soft inward pillow of her arm  
 Rested her burning cheek: she moved her eyes;  
 She blusht; and blushing plunged into the wave."

Gebir has made no declaration yet, but the day when he is to meet the queen is that which all expect to be their nuptial-day; and this meeting of the monarchs, amid the frantic exultation of the peoples, is the scene next presented to us: from which, onward to the end, an accumulating wealth of imagery, and of descriptions outvying each other in picturesqueness, is poured out with marvellous and apparently unconscious ease. As Hazlitt so finely said when Shakespeare's scene was also laid in Egypt, there is a richness like the overflowing of the Nile. I can spare however but small space for it.

"Now brazen chariots thunder through each street,  
 And neighing steeds paw proudly from delay.  
 While o'er the palace breathes the dulcimer,  
 Lute, and aspiring harp, and lisping reed,—  
 Loud rush the trumpets bursting through the throng  
 And urge the high-shouldered vulgar . . .  
 Now murmurs, like the sea or like the storm  
 Or like the flames on forests, move and mount  
 From rank to rank, and loud and louder roll,  
 Till all the people is one vast applause.  
 Yes, 't is herself, Charoba! Now the strife



To see again a form so often seen. . . .  
 She goes, the king awaits her from the camp:  
 Him she descried, and trembled ere he reacht  
 Her car: but shuddered paler at his voice.  
 So the pale silver at the festive board  
 Grows paler filled afresh and dewed with wine;  
 So seems the tenderest herbage of the spring  
 To whiten, bending from a balmy gale.  
 The beauteous queen alighting he received,  
 And sighed to loose her from his arms; she hung  
 A little longer on them through her fears."

That is very delicate and truthful; and the same gentleness of touch is repeated where, as Gebir's face changes under the influence of the poisoned robe, Charoba in her tenderness misinterprets it, and expects the declaration of his love. The lofty thrones had been erected for their meeting on the shore, commanding land and sea; and as queen and monarch take their seats,

"The brazen clarion hoarsens: many leagues  
 Above them, many to the south, the heron  
 Rising with hurried croak and throat outstretcht,  
 Ploughs up the silvering surface of her plain.  
 Tottering with age's zeal and mischief's haste  
 Then was discovered Dalica; she reacht  
 The throne, she leant against the pedestal,  
 And now ascending stood before the king.  
 Prayers for his health and safety she preferred,  
 And o'er his head and o'er his feet she threw  
 Myrrh, nard, and cassia, from three golden urns;  
 His robe of native woof she next removed,  
 And round his shoulders drew the garb accursed,  
 And bowed her head, departing. Soon the queen  
 Saw the blood mantling in his manly cheeks,  
 And feared, and faltering sought her lost replies,  
 And blessed the silence that she wished were broke.  
 Alas, unconscious maiden! . . .  
 Scarcely, with pace uneven, knees unnerved,  
 Reacht he the waters: in his troubled ear,  
 They sounded murmuring drearily; they rose  
 Wild, in strange colors, to his parching eyes;  
 They seemed to rush around him, seemed to lift  
 From the receding earth his helpless feet.  
 He fell: Charoba shriekt aloud; she ran  
 Frantic with fears and fondness, mazed with woe,  
 Nothing but Gebir dying she beheld.  
 The turban that betrayed its golden charge  
 Within, the veil that down her shoulder hung,  
 All fallen at her feet! the farthest wave  
 Creeping with silent progress up the sand  
 Glided through all, and raised their hollow folds."

She appeals to Dalica; she acquits her of any complicity with what she thinks the demons of her land have done; she invokes the pity and protection of her dead mother; she upbraids the Gods; she pours out unrestrained the whole wild passion of her love for Gebir.

"Thus raved Charoba: horror, grief, amaze,  
 Pervaded all the host: all eyes were fixt;  
 All stricken motionless and mute: the feast  
 Was like the feast of Cepheus, when the sword  
 Of Phineus, white with wonder, shook restrained,

And the hilt rattled in his marble hand.\*  
 She heard not, saw not, every sense was gone;  
 One passion banisht all; dominion, praise,  
 The world itself, was nothing. Senseless man!  
 What would thy fancy figure now from worlds?  
 There is no world to those that grieve and love."

The dying chief's last thought, meanwhile, is not of grandeur or of glory, or even of the desire for life, but of his happiness in carrying with him to the unknown realm, "more precious than the jewels that surround the necks of kings entombed," the pity and the tears of Charoba. The peoples are driven asunder once again; and there falls upon the separating hosts all the darkness of which there was foreboding even while the morning broke in happiness, — that night would close, and love and sovranity and life dissolve, and Egypt be "one desert drencht in blood."

It may now be a matter of some interest to the reader to know that every passage thus quoted appeared in the poem as originally published in 1798, and that not a line in any of them underwent alteration in the three subsequent reprints. The first, published early in the present century at Oxford, and to which further allusion will shortly be made, was a careful reproduction of the original, with some lines added and none omitted, but with correction of its multitude of misprints, and with explanatory notes and arguments. This earliest reprint appeared under the editorship of Mr. Robert Landon, who from his youth has had the admiration of a thinker and poet for this extraordinary poem; and the third, or latest, which appeared in the Collected Works of 1846, was as careful a reproduction of the copy which Landon had before included in his volume of Poems published in 1831, where again his additions were but very few, though his omissions were too full of meaning not to have mention here.

In the year when *Gebir* was written the world was ringing with the victories of Bonaparte; and a part of the vision of his descendants revealed to Tamar on his nuptial voyage, while they passed the islands of Sardinia and Corsica, had prefigured as arising amid the latter

"A mortal man above all mortal praise,"

and had depicted, under color of the triumph of the race of Tamar, a victorious march of the French Republic from the Garonne to the Rhine : —

"How grand a prospect opens! Alps o'er Alps  
 Tower, to survey the triumphs that proceed.  
 There, while Garumna dances in the gloom  
 Of larches, 'mid her naiads, or reclined  
 Leans on a broom-clad bank to watch the sports  
 Of some far-distant chamois silken-haired,  
 The chaste Pyrené, drying up her tears,

\* The intense dramatic force and suddenness of this allusion will especially strike the reader who remembers the story, as told by Ovid, of Phineus changed to marble by the Gorgon shield of Perseus.



Finds, with your children, refuge: yonder, Rhine  
Lays his imperial sceptre at their feet."

Nay, even Time itself, and the Seasons, were now to acknowledge their masters; for had not the months and weeks and days themselves taken new names!

"What hoary form so vigorous vast bends there?  
Time, — Time himself throws off his motley garb  
Figured with monstrous men and monstrous Gods,  
And in pure vesture enters their pure fanes,  
A proud partaker of their festivals.  
Captivity led captive, War o'erthrown,  
They shall o'er Europe, shall o'er Earth extend  
Empire that seas alone and skies confine,  
And glory that shall strike the crystal stars."

But now that these hopes had broken down, and the glorious expectation was over, the lines, with sundry others in similar strain, were swept entirely away; Landor merely remarking in one of his letters to Southey that he had cut out the political allusions. With one exception,\* all the passages thus omitted were taken from the Third and Sixth Books, and consisted of something over 150 lines. The additions, on the other hand, did not exceed fifty lines, and were intended to make more intelligible those passages of the tale in which the pruning-knife had before been used too freely. Speaking of this himself in his Preface to the 1831 edition of the *Poems*, — after telling us that *Gebir* was written in his twentieth year; that many parts were first composed in Latin, and he doubted in which language to complete it; and that he had lost the manuscript, but found it afterwards in a box of letters, — he adds, that before printing it he reduced it nearly to half. In substance this was the account he always gave, though the circumstances varied a little in his memory.† Writ-

\* Of this exception I will preserve in a note, for their beauty of cadence and expression, and because they were especially liked by Southey, the few lines that opened the poem: —

"When old Silenus called the Satyrs home,  
Satyrs then tender-hoof and ruddy-horned,  
With Bacchus and the Nymphs, he sometimes rose  
Amidst the tale or pastoral, and showed  
The light of purest wisdom; and the God  
Scattered with wholesome fruit the pleasant plains."

† For example, adverting in a poem of his later life to these early days in Wales, and his adventures with his pony Fidler, he gives a different version of *Gebir's* loss and recovery: —

"Sixty the years since Fidler bore  
My grouse-bag up the Bala Moor;  
Above the lake, along the lea,  
Where gleams the darkly yellow Dee;  
Through crags, o'er cliffs, I carried there  
My verses with paternal care,  
But left them, and went home again  
To wing the birds upon the plain.  
With heavier luggage half forgot,  
For many months they followed not.  
When over Tawey's sands they came  
Brighter flew up my winter flame. . . .  
*Gebir*! men shook their heads in doubt  
If we were sane: few made us out  
Beside one stranger . . ."

ing to me in 1857 of *Aurora Leigh*,\* he exclaims : "What loads I carted off from *Gebir* in order to give it proportion, yet nearly all would have liked it better with incorrectness" ; and in a letter to Southey, forty years earlier, he had written : "As to *Gebir*, I am certain that I rejected what almost every man would call the best part. I am afraid that I have boiled away too much, and that something of a native flavor has been lost in procuring a stronger and more austere one."

But though it is probable that some stop was thus put to the popularity of a poem where, as Coleridge said of it, the eminences were so excessively bright and the ground so dark around and between them, Landor is in a greater measure to be accounted fortunate, that thus early he could exercise the power invaluable to a poet, and which even to the best arrives often too late, of selection and compression. Among its advantages in the present case is undoubtedly this, that what the poem was at its first publication, it remains still ; it has not been improved into something altogether different ; and the reader's certainty that the passages of it now laid before him are unaltered since the boyish years when they were written, will increase his interest in the further development of so extraordinary a mind.

## II. SOME OPINIONS OF GEBIR.

The publication is thus described by Mr. Robert Landor : "Of *Gebir* he had the highest expectations, and yet it was intrusted to a very small bookseller at Warwick, without any one to correct the press, in the form of a sixpenny pamphlet. Excepting to some personal friends, it remained quite unknown till an article appeared, written by Southey, in the *Critical Review*, full of generous commendation. This was the beginning of their friendship. A few literary men only — Shelley, Reginald Heber, and, I think, Coleridge — read the poem even then ; and hardly a hundred copies were sold, till a much better edition, with a Latin translation, was published at Oxford under my superintendence. I discharged the office of editor quite unassisted by the author, who always seems to have felt a nervous bashfulness which transferred his works to the care of other people. Bashfulness doubtful of their success, not of their merits."

This remark explains the brief preface to the poem in which was thrown down so characteristically the measure of its author's expect-

\* "I am reading a poem," he says, "full of thought and fascinating with fancy, — Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh*. In many pages, and particularly 126 and 127, there is the wild imagination of Shakespeare. I have not yet read much further. I had no idea that any one in this age was capable of so much poetry. I am half drunk with it. Never did I think I should have a good hearty draught of poetry again: the distemper had got into the vineyard that produced it. Here are indeed, even here, some flies upon the surface, as there always will be upon what is sweet and strong. I know not yet what the story is. Few possess the power of construction."



tations. After describing it as principally written in Wales, and the fruit of idleness and ignorance, for "had he been a botanist or mineralogist it never had been written," he mentions the Arabian tale he had taken the hint of its story from, speaks of the few English writers who had succeeded in blank verse, distinguishing above all "the poet of our republic"; and closes by saying: "I am aware how much I myself stand in need of favor. I demand some little from Justice: I entreat much more from Candor. If there are now in England ten men of taste and genius who will applaud my poem, I declare myself fully content. I will call for a division; I shall count a majority."

The late Mr. De Quincey grudged him even the ten. He protested there were only two, and that he had for some time vainly "conceited" himself to be the sole purchaser and reader. Landor remarked upon this with amusing warmth in one of his letters to me in 1853: "It must have been under the influence of his favorite drug that he fancied Southey telling him he believed they were the only two who had read *Gebir*. Mr. De Quincey was not acquainted with Southey until very many years after he had written a noble panegyric on the poem inserted in the *Critical Review* in 1798. He did not know me until long after: but he had in that year recommended the poem to Charles Wynne, who told me so; and to the two Hebers; and to Coleridge, who praised it highly until he was present when Southey read or repeated parts of it before a large company, after which, if ever he mentioned it at all, it was slightly. Mr. De Quincey appears to have had another dream, too, of a conversation with Southey in which they agreed that I imitated Valerius Flaccus, whose poem I never had opened, but have looked into lately, and find it intolerable to get through beyond 200 lines.\* These dreams and the records of them will pass away; but 'exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor.' I think I know who this will be, and I expect no earlier vindication."

Not in the year of its publication, but in the September of the year following, Southey's notice appeared in the *Critical Review*. This I shall remark upon here, because of its writer; though my mention of the only other published review, which dates several months later, and was conceived in a very different spirit, must be reserved to another section. Southey's criticism was thin and colorless, but his tone was sufficiently laudatory. An outline of the story was given; such passages as "the Shell" were quoted, with the remark that the reader who did not instantly perceive their beauty must have a soul blind to the world of poetry; other passages were characterized as more Homeric than anything in modern poetical writing; and while,

\* That this was not altogether a dream, however, is presumable from the fact that Southey, in a notice in the *Annual Review* of Landor's *Poetry by the Author of Gebir*, to be presently mentioned, used this very comparison; and probably De Quincey derived his impression, not from the conversation, but from the review.

of the faults of the poem, those of an ill-chosen story and of a frequent absence of perspicuity in the language were pointed out as the most conspicuous, it was said of its beauties that they were of the first order, and that every circumstance was displayed with a force and accuracy which painting could not exceed. "It is not our business," Southey said in conclusion, after quoting the challenge from the author's preface given above, "to examine whether he has understated the number of men of taste and genius in England, but we have read his poem repeatedly with more than common attention, and with far more than common delight."

Before the review appeared, Southey had been speaking of the poem in the same strain to his private friends. To Cottle he wrote: "There is a poem called *Gebir*, of which I know not whether my review of it in the *Critical* be yet printed; but in that review you will find some of the most exquisite poetry in the language. . . . I would go a hundred miles to see the (anonymous) author." To Grosvenor Bedford in the following month he wrote: "There is a poem called *Gebir*, written by God knows who, sold for a shilling; it has miraculous beauties." Of William Taylor, of Norwich, a few days later, he asked if he had seen the poem; called it the miraculous work of a madman; said it was like a picture in whose obscure coloring no plan was discoverable, but in whose every distinct touch the master-hand was visible; and compared its intelligible passages to flashes of lightning at midnight. After a few months he started for Lisbon to visit his Uncle Hill, and before going wrote to Coleridge: "I take with me for the voyage your poems, the *Lyrics*, the *Lyrical Ballads*, and *Gebir*, — these make all my library. I like *Gebir* more and more; if you ever meet its author, tell him I took it with me on a journey." Detained on the point of sailing by westerly winds at Falmouth, he wrote to his brother the sea-captain that his time had been passed in walking on the beach sighing for northeasters, admiring the sea-anemonies, and reading *Gebir*. On arrival at Lisbon he wrote again to Coleridge, advising him once more to read *Gebir*; "he grows upon me." He was now himself writing *Thalaba*, and in the preface mentions the great improvement to his own verse in vividness and strength which he was sensible of having at this time derived from the frequent perusal of *Gebir*. After his return, in another letter to Coleridge, he alludes to the circumstance of their friend Humphry Davy having fallen stark mad with a play called the *Conspiracy of Gowrie*, which was by Rough, and a mere copy of that wonderful original, *Gebir*. This was in July, 1801; at which date also he was writing to Davy himself the letter before quoted,\* which notices his first acquaintance with Landor's name, and his recollection of him at Oxford: "How could you compare this man's book with Rough's? The lucid passages of *Gebir* are all palpable to the eye; they are the master-touches of a painter, — there is power in them, and passion,

\* *Ante*, p. 29.



and thought, and knowledge." The other he regarded as imitations merely, with a leading dash of *Gebir* through the whole.

This was not substantially unjust, though harshly expressed; but Rough nevertheless was a clever and noteworthy person, whose admiration Landor was glad to have for his own poem, and to repay in a generous fashion by no niggard praise of the poem written in imitation of it. They were for some time on very friendly terms; and some letters of Rough's between the date of 1800 and 1802 are preserved among Landor's papers. It will be time to advert to them when, with other friends of this early date connected with Warwick and its neighborhood, Rough will shortly reappear. I must not, meanwhile, omit to add that even among those Warwickshire acquaintance *Gebir* was not so fortunate as to find only friends.

At his father's house, in the two years between his retreat to Wales and the publication of his poem, Landor had been a frequent visitor; and during the seven unsettled years that followed before Doctor Landor's death, when neither pursuit nor place, nor, indeed, persons, attracted him for many months together, he was made welcome whenever he returned to Warwick; but to his father's especial friends, there can be little doubt, he was at all times less accommodating than he might have been. One of them was Miss Seward, a Staffordshire bluestocking so celebrated in those days that no less a person than Walter Scott became one of her editors; and her he flatly refused to meet only a few months before *Gebir* appeared. The lively lady remembered the slight; and took revenge characteristically in the remark of one of her letters,\* that nobody but the author of such a poem as *Gebir* could have written the review of it in the *Critical*. Southey (whom she thought a greater poet than Wordsworth or Coleridge, and was fond of comparing to Milton) tried to propitiate Landor's wrath and protect his fair friend's memory, when this unlucky letter came to light; but he was not successful. Landor replied with

\* The letter is dated in July, 1800, and addressed to one of the hangers-on of Parr, a clergyman named Fellowes, who wrote a "Picture of Christian Philosophy" and other volumes savoring more of the sentimental than the orthodox; but known in later years more favorably by active participation in some good works. "There is no longer any wonder that the *Critical Review* should praise that obscure fustian epic, *Gabor* (sic), since I learn from you that the author and critic are one person. I have been told that he has considerable talents and learning. *Gabor* is no proof of the first, since to think clearly is inseparable from great strength of intellect; though we often see scholastic knowledge exist in a mind where the lights of imagination, if they shine at all, shine but by glimpses, and where the judgment is wholly opaque" (v. 295). A couple of years later she wrote to Todd, the editor of Spenser and Milton, to console him for some adverse notice in the *Critical* by telling him how malicious she had always found "that tract" to be in noticing herself; "though I think I can stand it unwounded, beneath the reflection that I have seen that tract lavishing encomiums on the most unintelligible fustian that ever bore the name of an epic poem. It called itself *Gebir*." (She had got the right name at last.) "Southey told a friend of mine lately that it was the finest poetic work which had appeared these fifty years. So Johnson stilted up Blackmore" (vi. 29). A few months later, too, when Mr. Fellowes had sent a fresh supply of ill-natured gossip about Landor, she tells him how "charmed" she is with what he says of the author of *Gebir*, "and his other projected epic" (vi. 77). One cannot but feel that there is a relish of personal offence in all this, and that Landor's way of accounting for it is probably the right one.

a heat which, in its amazing disproportion to both the offence and the offender, is too characteristic to be lost.

"I shall not see anything more than the backs of Miss Seward's *Letters*. I attempted to read her *Life of Darwin*, but was so disgusted by her impudence I threw it down. Some of her poetry may be better. My father and my aunts were rather intimate with her. I never saw her. She was so polite as to say she should be very happy to see me, and added some high-flown and idle compliment on verses, very indifferent, which I wrote at seventeen. I am not surprised she liked them better than *Gebir*. They were more like her own. In reply to her courtesy I said what she never should have heard, 'that I preferred a pretty woman to a literary one.' From that time to the present, about thirteen years, I never heard anything more about her in which I was concerned. It vexes, I must own to you it more than vexes, it afflicts and torments me, to have it disseminated in circulating libraries and country book-clubs that I condescended to that last and vilest of all baseness, my own praises in a review. I know not any accusation so hateful. And this impudent — seems well to have known my character in selecting it for her rancor. I do not imagine that Mr. Gifford himself said this. Other men have the privilege of complaining which God and nature never permitted me. This stigma may burn into me till it burns through me: meaner men would bite and scratch it off."

This letter was written in 1811, before I was born; and a quarter of a century later, as I well remember, one of the first of his letters addressed to myself contained an entire battery of the epigrams which he had now fired off against Miss Seward and her friends, and had thought worth preserving all those years.

One of the friends was the Mr. Fellowes who seems to have told her first of the supposed identity of the poet and his critic, "very cavalierly," as Southey wrote to his friend. "This Fellowes," Landor replied, "is a person I often met at Parr's. I never knew that he spoke cavalierly except to his wife, whom he beat and separated from. I never exchanged a syllable with him.\* At Parr's I converse only with Parr." Somewhat unconsciously a characteristic trait is here let drop, of which there is an accurate illustration in one of his brother's letters. Referring to what was certainly true of Landor to the last, that, with noble bursts of energy in his talk, his temperament disqualified him for anything like sustained reasoning, and he instinctively turned away from discussion or argument, his brother had mentioned having seen him in his youth rush from the table of one of his own political friends, provoked by some slight contradiction that appeared disrespectful, when in truth there was no disrespect

\* That remark would probably explain the sentence in one of Mr. Fellowes's letters which quite enchanted Miss Seward when she read it. "The author of *Gebir*, who lives in this neighborhood, has lately made another attempt to convey the waters of Helicon by leaden pipes, and many dark subterranean ways, into the channel of the Avon. I have not seen these last effusions of his Muse; but, having trod the dark profound of *Gebir*, I feel no inclination to begin another journey which promises so little pleasure, and probably where only a few occasional flashes will enlighten the road." The attempt thus charitably spoken of was a thin little volume of *Poetry by the Author of Gebir* to be presently again mentioned.



but only a slight difference threatening controversy. "It was from Doctor Parr's table," Mr. Robert Landor replied to my further inquiry, "that he rushed so furiously; but not in anger with the Doctor, whom he always liked and with whom he never quarrelled. His anger was provoked by a Warwick physician whom he met there, — a Doctor Winthrop, — who felt astonished at the offence he had given. A very feeble reasoner who could govern his temper might be sure of victory over one, ten times his superior, who could not. Some slight interruption, even a smile, was provocation enough, if there were many witnesses present at the controversy, to decide it." His own assertion that at Parr's he never conversed but with Parr is made quite intelligible to us by this comment. Yet his intercourse with the old liberty-loving scholar and divine was very much the happiest, and far from the least profitable, of this period of his life; and it continued, without abatement of regard on either side, for many years.

Before account is given of it, one more opinion of *Gebir* shall be interposed. It anticipates my narrative by a few years, but expresses with singular vividness the fascination with which the poem seized from time to time on minds of the highest order, the attention thereby directed to its author from men whose notice constituted fame, and the degree of compensation so afforded by the few for the persistent neglect and dislike of the many.

Four years before *Gebir* appeared, Shelley was born, and its influence over him at more than one period of his life is recorded by his wife in her edition of his Poems. When he was at Oxford in 1811, we are told by the friend and fellow-collegian who was most intimate with him there, he would at times read nothing else; and Mr. Hogg relates that on the frequent occasions when he found him so occupied, it was hopeless to draw his attention away. There was something in the poem which in a peculiar manner caught his fancy. He would read it aloud to others, or to himself, with a tiresome pertinacity. One morning his friend went into his rooms to tell him something of importance, but he would attend to nothing but *Gebir*; whereupon Hogg describes himself with a young impatience snatching the book "out of the obstinate fellow's hand" and throwing it through the open window into the quadrangle; but unavailing, — for as it fell upon the grass-plot, and was brought presently back by the servant, again Shelley became absorbed in it, and the something of importance had to wait to another time. "I related this incident at Florence," adds Mr. Hogg, "some years afterwards, and after the death of my poor friend, to the highly gifted author. He heard it with his hearty, cordial, genial laugh. 'Well, you must allow it is something to have produced what could please one fellow-creature, and offend another, so much.' " \*

\* *Life of Shelley*, I. 201. "I regret," Mr. Hogg concludes, "that these two intellectual persons were not acquainted with each other. If I could confer a real benefit upon a friend, I would procure for him, if it were possible, the friendship of Walter Savage Landor."

Nothing has been said of *Gebir* better than that; and when correct adjustment has been made of the relative values of praise and censure received by it, from those it so greatly pleased and those it so much offended, its place will at last be accurately ascertained.

### III. DOCTOR PARR.

In the first article written by Sydney Smith in the *Edinburgh Review*, he reproachfully called attention to the fact that by far the most learned man of his day\* was languishing on a little paltry curacy in Warwickshire. This was Doctor Parr, whose name at the beginning of the century, little as it is now remembered where learning and literature are in question, was held in undeniable respect by the first scholars in Europe. Parr never indeed stood higher in esteem than at the time of the publication of *Gebir*, to the admiration of whose ardent writer he presented a threefold claim. To the skilled Latin student he was the author of the *Preface to Bellendenus*; to the eager politician he was the friend of Fox and Grey; to the young adventurer in literature he had the charm of association with a greater Doctor Samuel, the chief of English men of letters, who had lately passed away. "Sir," said Johnson to Bennet Langton, in one of those conversations which Boswell's wonderful book had just then given to the world, "Parr is a fair man. I do not know when I have had an occasion of such free controversy." They had talked upon the liberty of the press; and Johnson, stamping unconsciously in the heat of the argument, had stopped suddenly on seeing Parr give a great stamp. "Why did you stamp, Doctor Parr?" he asked. "Sir," replied Parr, "because you stamped; and I was resolved not to give you the advantage even of a stamp in the argument." This was good Johnsonian give-and-take, and would certainly not lower his namesake in Johnson's opinion; but it must be added that the trick of stamping remained too much with the lesser Samuel, who also practised afterwards pompous oracular ways, and dealt greatly in sonorous words, apparently derived from the same source. But, notwithstanding much pretentious and preposterous writing, what was most prominent in Parr's character was neither assumed nor commonplace. Johnson said it was a pity that such a man and such a scholar should be a Whig; and, considering that with the dispensers of church patronage in those days the most moderate forms of Whiggism were but other forms of Atheism, Deism, Socinianism, or any of the rest of the isms that to a clergyman meant infamy and poverty, a more judicious choice of opinions might undoubtedly have been made. But in his way Parr was quite as sincere a man as Johnson, and opinions were as little a matter of mere choosing to the one as to the other.

\* Porson was then dead. While he lived Parr would say, "The first Greek scholar is Porson, and the third Elmsley: I won't say who the second is."



Up to the time of the French Revolution Doctor Landor had himself been a Whig, as all Warwickshire had reason to know; for it was he who brought forward Sir Robert Lawley and Mr. Ladbroke at the election which broke down Lord Warwick's predominance in the county. But when the split in the party came, and Burke carried over the deserters from Fox, Doctor Landor cast in his lot with them, and became also Pitt's vehement supporter. His son Walter, on the other hand, went as far as he could in the opposite extreme; and would doubtless have gone to the other side of England for the pleasure of greeting a friend of Mr. Fox so loud and uncompromising as Doctor Parr was at this time. As it was, he had to do little more than cross the threshold of his father's door.

At Hatton (Heath-town), a retired village on an eminence near what was then a wide tract of heath, two or three miles from Warwick on the Birmingham Road, Parr had lived since 1783, when Lady Trafford presented him to its perpetual curacy. He was a poor man when he went there; but when more prosperous days came to him he was too fond of the place to leave it, and there he died. At the small brick parsonage he built out a good-sized library, which he filled with books of which the printed catalogue is still consulted with interest by scholars; and this became at last his dining-room also, where not seldom, at his frequent festivities, neither books nor friends were visible for the clouds of tobacco that rose and enveloped them from his morning, afternoon, and evening pipes. Sydney Smith says he had too much of his own way at these social parties, and would have been better for more knocking about among his equals; but the same sentence that laughs at him for his airs of self-importance celebrates not the less his copious and varied learning, the richness of his acquisitions, the vigor of his understanding, and above all the genuine goodness of his heart. Undue prominence was indeed given by two circumstances to the weak points in Parr's character: they were all upon the surface, and they were all of the quizzible kind. He had a quantity of foolish personal vanity; a lisp made more absurd his pompous way of speaking; and a corpulent figure set off disadvantageously his vagaries of dress. When he lost the Mastership of Harrow it was said that he went far completely to console himself by mounting that famous obumbrating wig, which, as Sydney said of it, swelled out behind into boundless convexity of frizz. But there is something not difficult to forgive in absurdities of this kind, when accompanied by unworldliness of nature; and it is undoubtedly the case that Parr was at the bottom a very kindly and a very simple man. He could stand by those who had claims on his friendship, though all the rest of the world should fall from them; and it is the remark of a keen and unsparing judge of men, William Taylor, of Norwich, in a comparison he makes between Parr and Mackintosh, that, whereas the latter inspired admiration rather than attachment, there was a lovingness about Parr and a susceptibility of affection that

gave him an immense superiority.\* The time when Landor first knew Parr was that of Mackintosh's greatest intimacy with him ; and of the characteristic traits of their intercourse still remembered there are few better than the remark made by Parr after a long argument. "Jemmy, I cannot talk you down ; but I can think you down, Jemmy." It expresses at the same time one of those weaknesses by which it so often came to pass that Parr's company was inferior to himself, and such as he could talk down only too easily. But, even with Mackintosh, he had not seldom the upper hand. "Formerly," wrote Landor in one of his latest letters to Southey,† "I used to meet Mackintosh rather frequently. I never knew that he was so stored and laden as you give me to believe. He was certainly very inaccurate, not only in Greek but in Latin. Once at breakfast with Parr in Cary Street, where I was and Hargrave and Jekyl, he used the word *anabásis*. Parr said, 'Very right, Jemmy ! very right ! it is *anabásis* with you, but *anábasis* with me and Walter Landor.' I was very much shocked and grieved ; indeed, to such a degree, that I felt indisposed to take any part in the conversation afterwards ; only saying (which was not quite true) that I did not know it until then : which obtained me a punch of the elbow under the rib, and the interjection of *lying dog !*"

Some of the points I have thus thought it fair to prefix to such mention of Landor's intercourse with Parr as will appear in these pages from time to time, receive also illustration, valuable because of personal knowledge, from one of Mr. Robert Landor's letters. He begins by speaking of a recent paper on Parr by Mr. De Quincey, published in the sixth volume of his collected works ; and it is proper to remark that he writes with less sympathy for Parr's political opinions than for those of his critic. "If Mr. De Quincey had been desirous to show us how far it might be possible to convey the most false and injurious notions of a man in language which no one could contradict, which said nothing but the truth, he could hardly have succeeded better. What he has written is very true and very false ; but there are some old people, like myself, who may wish that the mixture had been less skilfully malicious, and a great deal more honest. There was some resemblance between the doctor and my

\* Among Landor's papers I found the following : —

"From the old brown portfolio. Presented to Parr as an Epitaph, December 21, 1799.

"Here lies our honest friend Sam Parr:  
A better man than most men are.  
So learned, he could well dispense  
Sometimes with merely common sense:  
So voluble, so eloquent,  
You little heeded what he meant:  
So generous, he could spare a word  
To throw at Warburton or Hurd:  
So loving, every village maid  
Sought his caresses, though afraid."

† August, 1832.



brother. Never could there be a vainer man than the one, or a prouder man than the other: the comic part of the same selfish passion, and the tragic. Both demanded admiration,—the Doctor of his wig, his cassock, the silk frogs on his new coat; Walter of his very questionable jests recommended by a loud laugh. Both were very delightful when in good humor, and dangerously offensive when displeased. Mr. De Quincey represents the Doctor as talking gross nonsense; and so he often did. But then, at other times, his conversation was the most eloquent and abundant in charming imagery that it has ever been my fortune to hear.\* Both resented the slightest appearance of disrespect: but Parr was much the most placable and willing to be reconciled. Mr. De Quincey should have recorded his warm-hearted sincerity in friendship, which hardly failed when friendship had become not only dangerous but discreditable. Perhaps you would have thought that my brother excelled in genius, imagination, power, and variety, when at his best, as much as Parr exceeded him in all kinds of acquired knowledge. There was the same resemblance in the warmth of their love and hatred; but Parr's love lasted the longest, and so did Walter's hatred. It would be impossible to determine which of them hated one particular connection the most; nor whether either had ever hated any one else so much. Beside the great difference in the age of these competitors (Walter was twenty-three at the publication of *Gebir*, and Parr fifty-one), and, at that time, of reputation, I think that they were kept from quarrels by mutual respect, by something like awe of each other's temper, and a knowledge that, if war began at all, it must be to the knife. "It would be great impertinence in me," Mr. Landor adds, "if any opinions were offered here on the Doctor's literary pretensions. But surely the pretensions of a writer and reasoner familiar, during many years, with Charles Fox, James Mackintosh, Bobus Smith, Richard Sharp, Samuel Rogers, and other distinguished people, could hardly have been so contemptible as it is now the fashion to suppose. I say this, though he once treated me more offensively than any one else ever did."

The correspondence of Parr and Landor, while the latter was still at Oxford, has been mentioned in a preceding page; † and such of Parr's later letters as I possess, with one or two of Landor's, though of not much moment in themselves and but a fragment of what passed between them, will show well enough, as I quote them from time to time in my memoir, the character of their intercourse. *Gebir*, as soon as published, found its way to Hatton, with a letter in which the writer told Parr that, however proud and presumptuous he might have shown himself in the effort he had made, he rather thought that during the time the Doctor was reading and examining it he should himself be undergoing much the same sensation as the unfortunate

\* This is entirely borne out by the account of William Taylor, of Norwich.

† *Ante*, p. 25.

Polydorus, while his tomb, new turfed and spruce and flourishing, was plucked for a sacrifice to Æneas. But the Doctor's weak point was poetry ; his taste in that respect was "Bromwychian," as Landor described it to Southey ; and the poem awakened little interest in him till it appeared in its Latin form. Yet was he swift to recognize a vigor and animation in his young friend's mode of writing, whether verse or prose, which he knew to be out of the common at that time ; and with amusing eagerness he did his best to enlist him on Fox's side in the strife of politics and papers then raging.

The share that Coleridge and Southey had in that memorable strife is well known, and even Lloyd and Lamb were taking part with their puns and pleasantries. They had, all of them, engagements on the *Courier* or on the *Morning Post* ; Dan Stewart, Mackintosh's brother-in-law, of whom Lamb has left a whimsical sketch, being Magnus Apollo at the *Post*, and exercising at the *Courier* also not a little of the influence which he handed over a few years later to Coleridge. But very different was Landor's position from theirs. Those were days when Southey would often walk the street dinnerless at dinner-time, without a shilling in his pocket for the ordinary, or for bread and cheese at his lodgings ; when he and Coleridge were content with Dan Stewart's guinea a week ; and when he thought it "not amiss," as he tells his brother Tom, by eight months' contributing to monthly magazines and reviews, to make as much as seven pounds and two pairs of breeches. Landor's bread and cheese and breeches were found for him. He was not a hired soldier, but a volunteer ; and seems never to have sought acquaintance with the regular rank and file. His contributions, chiefly to the *Courier*, were in the form of letters with or without his name ; and though as fierce against Pitt and the war party as even Parr could desire, they had an awkward trick of bolting out of the Fox preserves and running after game that was more to the writer's liking. For a time, nevertheless, Parr appears to have kept him within bounds, by the help mainly of Fox's fidus Achates Robert Adair.

Several of Adair's letters to Landor are before me, between the dates of 1800 and 1806. They show what difficulty Parr had in bringing them together ; what a shrewd opinion of Landor's possible value in the press Adair formed at once ; how willing he was to overlook even such Anti-Whig heresies as Landor's dislike of William the deliverer ; and what pains were taken to put so clever a fellow in the proper way. He and Adair would meet at Debrett's, in Piccadilly, and go down together to the House of Commons, "the most costly exhibition in Europe," as Landor amused Adair by calling it ; and ultimately it was so arranged that access to the reporters' gallery should generally be open to him. They were present together, among other occasions, at the stormy debate of that March night of 1801 when Lord Castlereagh brought in his bill to prolong the act enabling the Lord-Lieutenant to put Ireland under martial law.



Landor meanwhile was busy with his pen against Pitt and the Ministry. He would send letters for Adair's approval, seldom satisfied with them himself; whereas Adair only admitted his right to undervalue such compositions on the ground that rich men might be allowed to be prodigal, and to scatter about their liberalities without too severely reckoning up the amount of them. When Landor was absent from London, too, I find Adair making it his business to examine back files of the *Courier* to see if a particular letter of his had been given; writing to him that he considers its omission to be evidence of the degraded state of the English press; excepting Mr. Perry from this remark, as a man of inviolable honor; and promising Landor better treatment at the *Morning Chronicle*, if he will but consent to contribute to that paper.

Adair had some cause for his bitterness about the press, the *Anti-Jacobin* having singled him out for a succession of its most scurrilous jokes, and the ministerial papers ever since keeping up the merciless battery. He had in truth become a special mark for them by exactly such service to the other party as he was now trying to render in the instance of Landor; his appearance in the reporters' gallery among the press-men, or his introduction of some new pamphleteer to Ridgway or Debrett, being frequent subjects of derision with Ellis, Frere, and Canning.

"I whom, dear Fox, you condescend  
To call your honorable friend,  
Shall live for everlasting:  
The Stygian gallery I'll quit, ^  
Where printers crowd me as I sit  
Half dead with rage and fasting.  
Scotch, English, Irish Whigs shall read  
The pamphlets, letters, odes *I breed*,  
Charmed with each bright endeavor, —  
Alarmists tremble at my strain,  
E'en Pitt, made candid by champagne,  
Shall hail Adair the clever."

The same laugh at his pretensions and taste in letters is in Canning's *Counter-Epistle*.

"Or art thou one, THE PARTY'S flattered fool,  
Trained in Debrett's or Ridgway's civic school,  
Who sees nor taste nor genius in these times  
Save Parr's buzz prose —"

and in his Oriental letter from "Bauba-Dara-Adul-Phoola," the same unscrupulous wit, showing what scant accommodation might suffice for a brace of Whig bedfellows, again coupled Adair\* and Parr.

"There was great Dr. Parr, whom we style Bellendenus:  
The Doctor and I have a hammock between us."

But this was the kind of thing that in those days all had to expect who set themselves resolutely against the "drunken democracy of Mr. William Pitt," as Landor not inaptly christened the Anti-Gallican frenzy. He had soon to encounter it in his own person. "The

\* "Bauba-Dara-Adul-Phoola" is of course "Bob Adair, a dull fool."

*Anti-Jacobin*,"\* he wrote to Parr, "has assailed me with much virulence, — I am a coward and a profligate. On the latter expression, as I know not the meaning of it, I shall be silent. The former is a plain intelligible word; and if I discover the person who has made this application of it, I will give him some documents that shall enlighten his judgment at the expense of his skin. Could you imagine it? *You* also are mentioned with a proportionate share of insolence. Let them pass. Who would stop a cloud that overshadows his garden? The cloud is transitory, the garden blooms. Thank God, I have a mind more alive to kindness than to contumely. The statue of Memnon is insensible to the sands that blow against it, but answers in a tender tone to the first touches of the sun. Come, come, let me descend from these clouds and this romance, at which you will laugh most heartily, and quote in my favor the example of Mr. Lemuel Gulliver who, when the Liliputians climbed and crept over him, forbore that contention which a more equal or a more formidable enemy would have aroused." We have, nevertheless, now to show how weak was Mr. Gulliver's deterring example, and how little formidable after all was the enemy by whose censure the young poet could be moved to resentment and reply.

#### IV. ATTACK OF THE MONTHLY REVIEW.

At the 206th page of the thirty-first volume of the *Monthly Review*, published in 1800, will be found the following :—

##### "GEBIR.

"An unpractised author has attempted, in this poem, the difficult task of relating a romantic story in blank verse. His performance betrays all the incorrectness and abruptness of inexperience, but it manifests occasionally some talent for description. He has fallen into the common error of those who aspire to the composition of blank verse, by borrowing too many phrases and epithets from our incomparable Milton. We must further observe that the story is told very obscurely, and should have been assisted by an Argument in prose. Young writers are often astonished to find that passages, which seem very clear to their own heated imaginations, appear very dark to their readers. The author of the poem before us may produce something worthy of more approbation, if he will labor hard, and delay for a few years the publication of his next performance."

Exactly so. An ordinary reviewer cannot help this sort of thing when an original book falls in his way; and Landor, who had professed his readiness to be content with less than a dozen admirers if they were but of the worthiest, might very well have smiled at this harmless review. Not small, indeed, was his amusement in later

\* This was not Canning's *Anti-Jacobin and Weekly Examiner*, but its successor, the *Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine*: the same that libelled Southey, Coleridge, Lloyd, and Lamb, in the "toad-and-frog" caricature, and which is generally confounded with its hardly more respectable parent and predecessor.



years at precisely such critical effusions ; when he would picture himself watching the appearance of a first-rate book as the rarest of all occurrences, and laugh at ordinary people's ways in slowly rising up to the unaccustomed visitor. They were like nothing so much, he said, as carp in a pond when food is thrown in : some snatching suddenly at a morsel and swallowing it ; others with their barb gently touching it and passing it by ; others more disdainfully wriggling and rubbing against it ; and others, in sober truth, such as our friend here of the *Monthly*, in a genuine and puzzled ignorance what to make of it, "swimming round and round it, eying it on the sunny side, eying it on the shady, approaching it, questioning it, shouldering it, flapping it with the tail, turning it over, looking askance at it, taking a pea-shell or a worm instead of it, and plunging again their heads into the comfortable mud."

In his own comfortable mud, however, the reviewer was not to be left on this particular occasion. Landor resolved to drag him forth and punish him, and with this view planned a Prose Postscript to *Gebir*. This was a wonderful production of its kind : impressed with character, impetuous, scornful, eloquent, confident ; sparkling with turns of wit and with bright fancies ; critical in Greek and Latin, and replete with other scholarship, particularly of good old English : but withal so personal, and so vehemently as well as (if it must be said) coarsely wrong in many ways, that for Landor it must be esteemed a fortunate occurrence that before the final step was taken with it a friendly judgment should have interposed. It was suppressed ; but, finding it among his papers, I shall not hesitate to give such portions of it here as may now with propriety be preserved. Some touches in it personal to himself are full of value ; and it is remarkable for the complete promise it gives thus early of what was ultimately to place him in so high a rank among writers of English prose.

He preaches from a peaceful text, as men bent upon war are apt to do, prefixing a sentence from one of the letters of Linnæus to Gronovius : "Ego potius tranquille vivere desidero quam ab adversariis victorias et tropæa reportare" : the adversaries from whom, after this self-denying ordinance, he straightway proceeds to pluck their trophies and victories, being it should be premised not alone the Monthly Reviewers, and prominently among them a certain Mr. Pybus who had dabbled in verse and was supposed to have written the offending notice, but also the Anti-Jacobins and their allies, including Mr. Isaac D'Israeli who was just then coming up, Mr. Mathias of surprisingly absurd reputation, and some others.

The Anti-Jacobins and the general character of their literature were well sketched at the opening. "*Gebir* in different quarters," he says, "has been differently received. I allude not to those loyal critics, who, recently mounted on their city war-horse, having borrowed the portly boots and refurbished the full-bottomed perukes of the ancient French chevaliers, are foremost to oppose the return of that traitor,

whom while he was amongst them Englishmen called Freedom, but now they have expelled him, Anarchy : since the very first Reviews of this association were instituted, not merely for parade, but for hostility ; not for exercise, correctness, and precision, but, so adventurous and impetuous were the conscripts, for actual and immediate battle."

To the *Critical* and *Monthly*, as being of the old establishment, he passes next, and refers gratefully to the notice by Southey, ignorant still of his name. "In respect to *Gebir* the one is perhaps conducted by a partial, but certainly by a masterly hand. It objects, and indeed with reason, to a temporary and local obscurity, which I have not been able, or I have not been willing, or I have not been bold enough, to remove : but never on the whole, since its first institution, has a poem been more warmly praised." Turning then to the *Monthly*, he describes it as consisting of two misstatements : "that the poem was nothing more than the version of an Arabic tale ; and that the author, not content with borrowing the expressions, had made the most awkward attempts to imitate the phraseology of Milton." To which he replies, that there is not a single sentence in the poem nor a single sentiment in common with the Arabian tale. Some characters were drawn more at large, some were brought out more prominently, and several were added. He had not changed the scene, which would have distorted the piece ; but every line of appropriate description, and every shade of peculiar manners, were originally and entirely his own. Thus, whether "this gentleman" had read the poem or not, and whether he had read the romance or not, his account equally was false and malicious. "For the romance is in English, therefore he could have read it ; the poem is in English, and therefore he could have compared it. There is no disgrace in omitting to read them : the disgrace is, either in pretending to have done what he had not done, or in assuming a part which he was incompetent to support."

And there was a further and worse disgrace, which Landor ingeniously fixes on his reviewer as an inference from the charge against himself of having borrowed Milton's epithets and phrases. "There is a disgrace in omitting to read Milton ; there is a disgrace in forgetting him." Thus early had taken root in his mind that profound veneration for the most majestic of English poets which steadily attended him without abatement to the close of life, and which, as it rises or falls in England, may be taken as no indifferent or inexact measure of value as well in poetry as in the taste for it. How could this critic possibly have read or remembered Milton, says Landor, when he accuses me of borrowing his expressions ? "I challenge him to produce them. If indeed I *had* borrowed them, so little should I have realized by the dangerous and wild speculation, that I might have composed a better poem and not have been a better poet. But I feared to break open, for the supply of my games or for the main-



tenance of my veteran heroes, the sacred treasury of the great republican." Well, but if you had, some one still might ask, where would have been the crime or the harm; and why assail this critic, who may be paying you a compliment after all? Yes, rejoins Landor, if my vanity could stoop so low and live on so little; but I have to add, "for the information of my young opponent, what a more careful man would conceal, and what in his present distress will relieve him greatly, that this, which among the vulgar and thoughtless might currently pass for praise, is really none at all. For the language of *Paradise Lost* ought not to be the language of *Gebir*. There should be the softened air of remote antiquity, not the severe air of unapproachable sanctity. I devoutly offer up my incense at the shrine of Milton. Woe betide the intruder that would steal its jewels! It requires no miracle to detect the sacrilege. The crime will be found its punishment. The venerable saints, and still more holy personages, of Raphael or Michael Angelo, might as consistently be placed among the Bacchanals and Satyrs, bestriding the goats and bearing the vases of Poussin, as the resemblance of that poem, or any of its component parts, could be introduced in mine." Nothing could be better said than that.

Full of character, too, are the sentences that follow, showing the writer at the outset of his life just as he was to its close. With an amusing self-consciousness and confidence which he would be a poor observer who should describe as vanity, he calmly tells his reviewer how it was that such review-writers as he is cannot help the dull mistakes they make, and winds up his lesson with an offer exactly prefiguring that with which he startled the reviewing world twenty-five years later, when he promised a hot penny-roll and a pint of stout for breakfast to any critic who could show himself capable of writing a dialogue equal to the worst of his *Imaginary Conversations*.\*

"I have avoided high-sounding words. I have attempted to throw back the gross materials, and to bring the figures forward. I knew beforehand the blame that I should incur. I knew that people would cry out: 'Your burden was so light, we could hardly hear you breathe; pray where is your merit?' For there are few who seem thoroughly acquainted with this plain and simple truth, that it is easier to elevate the empty than to support the full. I also knew the *body* of my wine, and that years must pass over it before it would reach its relish. Some will think me intoxicated, and most will misconstrue my good-nature, if I invite the Reviewer, or any other friend that he will introduce, — but himself the most earnestly, as I suspect from his manner that he *poetizes*, — to an amicable trial of skill. I will subject myself to any penalty, either of writing or of ceasing to write, if the

\* Even when writing his boyish "Moral Epistle," there was the same amusing self-confidence; some capital couplets at the close of that satire, in which the patriots Parham and Shippen are celebrated, closing with a promise to them that each should be immortal; but that if any accident should prevent it, they were nevertheless to lie tranquil in their tombs and say: —

"Ye Powers  
Of Darkness! it is LANDOR'S fault, not ours!"

author, who criticises with the flightiness of a poet, will assume that character at once, and taking in series my twenty worst verses, write better an equal number in the period of twenty years. I shall be rejoiced if he will open to me any poems of my contemporaries, of my English contemporaries I mean, and point out three pages more spirited, I will venture to add more classical, than the three least happy and least accurate in *Gebir*."

Well: shall we be angry at this? There is a remark of Doctor Johnson's on the most affecting of Shakespeare's plays, — where he says the characters of that poet, however distressed, have always a conceit left them in their misery, "a miserable conceit," — which has probably suggested to many a humane reader that if a conceit should be all that is left to poor misery, it might be hard at least to grudge it *that*. One would in like manner say, that if a poet distressed by want of readers should comfort his loneliness with a trifle of self-praise, it can be hardly worth while to punish him for it. Vanity in the vulgar sense, bred of abundance of worshippers and of the fumes of perpetual incense, it undoubtedly is not; and with a somewhat touching sense of what it really is, Landor follows up the remark just quoted: pleading with simplicity the precedent of contenders for a prize in old Greek days, and saying that if others would have spoken for him, he should himself have been silent. He describes the circumstances and way in which *Gebir* was written, and refers to the earlier poems published by him on leaving Oxford. The passage has the interest of autobiography, and all of it is worth preservation.

"Many will think that I should have suppressed what I have said; but let them recollect that among those ancient poets who contended for the public prize, each must not only have formed the same determination (for defects are not usually compared with defects, but are generally contrasted with beauties), but have actually engaged, and that too more openly and personally, in a still more strenuous competition. *If my rights had not been refused me, I should not have asserted my claims.* Rambling by the side of the sea, or resting on the top of a mountain, and interlining with verses the letters of my friends, I sometimes thought how a Grecian would have written, but never what methods he would take to compass popularity. The nearer I approached him, though distant still, the more I was delighted. I may add,

O belle agli occhj miei tende *latine*!  
Aura spira da voi che mi rierea,  
E mi conforta pur che m'avvicine.'

Tasso, *Gerus. Liberata*.

Several of these sketches were obliterated, still more laid aside and lost; various ideas I permitted to pass away, unwilling to disturb by the slightest action the dreams of reposing fancy. So little was I anxious to publish my rhapsodies, that I never sat down in the house an hour at once for the purpose of composition. Instead of making, or inviting, courtship, I declared with how little I should rest contented. Far from soliciting the attention of those who are passing by, *Gebir* is confined, I believe, to the shop of one bookseller, and I never heard that he had even made his appearance at the window. I understand not the management of those matters, but I find that the writing of a book is the least that an author has to do. My ex-



perience has not been great; and the caution which it has taught me lies entirely on the other side of publication. Before I was twenty years of age I had imprudently sent into the world a volume \* of which I was soon ashamed. It everywhere met with as much commendation as was proper, and generally more. For, though the structure was feeble, the lines were fluent; the rhymes showed habitual ease, and the personifications fashionable taste. I suffered any of my heroes, the greater part of whom were of a gentle kind, to look on one side through the eye of Pity, on the other through that of Love; and it was with great delight, for I could not foresee the consequences, that I heard them speak or sing with the lips of soft Persuasion. So early in life I had not discovered the error into which we were drawn by the Wartons. I was then in raptures with what I now despise. I am far from the expectation, or the hope, that these deciduous shoots will be supported by the ivy of my maturer years."

Then succeed passages not less calling for suppression now than when originally written; but connected with others in which the style of reviewing then prevalent, and not excused by any special capacity in the reviewers, is condemned too characteristically not to be worth preservation. For, though wit and invective are here also used unsparingly, what is said to the critic on the author's behalf is a thing not too often remembered, and very often much needed to be said. Certainly the best critic will be least disposed to object to it. The remarks are introduced by an apology for the haste and incorrectness with which *Gebir* had been printed.

"Still there was nothing to authorize the impertinence with which the publication was treated by the *Monthly* reviewer. These are not the faults which he complains of; though these might, without his consciousness, have first occasioned his ill-humor. I pity his want of abilities, and I pardon his excess of insolence. The merit is by no means small of a critic who speaks with modesty. For his time being chiefly occupied, at first, in works fundamentally critical, at least if we suppose him desirous to learn before he is ambitious to teach, he thinks, when he has attained their expressions and brevity, he has attained their solidity and profoundness. He must surely be above what he measures, else how can he measure with exactness? He must be greater *ex officio* than the person he brings before him; else how can he stigmatize with censure, or even dismiss with praise?"

But how if he should *not* be all this, nor have learned anything before he began to teach everything? How if it should suffice him, insect-like, to enclose in his flimsy web what he would be hopeless of reaching in its flight? How if his production, too, should be only after the kind of the miserable insect, a month in generating, a moment in existence?

"Miserable do I call them? Alas for the wise and virtuous; alas for human nature! Though Justice, in descending on the world again, has given it a partial revolution, so that some who were in sunshine are in shade,—some of the highest and most prominent,—yet, when I cast my

\* See *ante*, p. 35.

eyes immediately around me, and can discern what passes both in public and in private, I find too often that those are the least miserable who occasion the most misery. For, when any one has done an injury, the power that enabled him to do it comes back upon the mind, and fills it with such a complacency as smooths away all the contrition that the action of this injury would have left. And little power is requisite to work much mischief."

Some personal applications follow, rounded off by a passage where the wit and eloquence are at least as conspicuous as the bitterness.

"Flies and reviewers fill their bellies while they irritate. Both of them are easily crushed, but neither of them easily caught. They lead pleasant lives in their season. The authors who can come into a share of a monthly publication are happy as playwrights who manage a theatre, or as debtors who purchase a seat in our excellent House of Commons.

"They in what shape they choose,  
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,  
Can execute their airy purposes,  
And works of love or enmity fulfil."

They hunt over domains more extensive than their own; trample down fences which they cannot *clear*; strip off the buds and tear away the branches of all the most promising young trees that happen to grow in their road; plough up the lawns; muddy the waters; and when they return benighted home again, carouse on reciprocal flattery. Men of genius, on the contrary, may be compared to those druidical monuments, stately and solitary, reared amidst barrenness, exposed to all weather, unimpaired, unaltered, which a child perhaps may move, but which not a giant can take down."

The manuscript closes with a comment on the reviewer's charge of "borrowing," interesting for its evidence of Landor's literary reading thus early. Particularly should evidence and instances be adduced, he remarks, where accusations of plagiarism are preferred; for the general charge can be almost always made excuse for ignorance and malice. "Plagiarism, imitation, and allusion, three shades that soften from blackness into beauty, are by the glaring eye of the malevolent blended into one." Yet how different they are, he has as little difficulty in showing as in demonstrating the Spartan character of even the blackest of the three. You are punished, not because you steal, but because you are detected, through want of spirit and address in carrying off your booty. Some of his illustrations are excellent, and were new to me.

In connection with the passage from Montaigne, for example, which represents the goose arguing after his fashion: "All the parts of the universe I have an interest in: I have advantage by the winds, and convenience by the waters: the earth serves me to walk upon, the sun to light me, the sky to cover me: I am the darling of nature; and is it not man that treats, lodges, and serves me?"\*

\* The passage is in the 12th chapter of the 2d book of the *Essays*, and will be found in *Cotton*, II. 348.



—he places two couplets by Pope, taken from the first and the third epistle of the *Essay on Man*: the art of the plagiarism consisting in the different application made of the several parts of the original.

“Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise,  
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies.”

“While man exclaims, ‘See all things for my use’:  
‘See man for mine,’ replies a pampered goose.”

Beside the famous lines on Addison, too, —

“Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer,” —

he places this capital passage out of a personification of Envy, from “a poet seldom read, though of a vigorous mind and lively imagination,” as he justly characterizes Phineas Fletcher:—

“When needs he must, yet faintly then he praises,  
Somewhat the deed, but more the means, he raises;  
So marreth what he makes, and praising most dispraises”;

drawing from it the remark that if Pope had scrupled to apply to his own use the colors thus prepared by Fletcher, he might have failed in the exquisite perfection of his satire; and appending this further reflection, that the lines which had done nothing for Fletcher’s fame had thus very materially helped the later poet to his happiest piece, “in a department of writing where he adds the observation of Donne to the vivacity of Ariosto, and gives to the sword of Juvenal the point of Boileau.”

In a spirit not less fair or discriminating he proceeds to say of Addison, in his double character of essayist and poet, that even in the former, where indeed he is perfectly at home, there is often more to commend in the cleanliness of his dishes than in the flavor of his meat. “His success, like that of most men, is the result of keeping within the scope of his abilities. He had wit, yet he never could have been a Molière; and he was penetrating in inquiry and skilful in argument, yet he never could have been a Beccaria. He is cool and dispassionate; he is therefore a good observer and a bad poet: but there is something, it must be acknowledged, inexpressibly charming in the manner of his narration. There is the slyness of Cupid and the sweetness of the Graces.” Times there were also, Landon seems to have thought, when there was the slyness without the attractiveness. He takes Pope’s side in their quarrel; and expresses surprise that while Boileau was attacking, in Quinault and others, men of more lively fancy than his own, Pope should so often have been content to place himself lower than Addison. But this reminds him again of his own Monthly and Anti-Jacobin assailants, and that the fashion of Pope’s day had mightily altered since.

“The French and we still change; but here’s the curse,  
They change for better, and we change for worse.”

Abroad, continues Landor, poets and men of letters support even each other's imbecility by mutual embraces, while we waste our little strength in personal animosities. These remarks are excellent : —

“ In France and Germany men of talents are received with cordiality by their brethren. In England, if their brethren look upon them, it is with a grudging eye ; as upon those no otherwise connected with them than to share their fortune. There, it is thought that genius and wit enhance the national glory. In England, it is the acquisition of sugar and slaves. . . . Yet in England too, if we look a century back, we shall find that poetry in particular, while it was current, rose marvellously above its level. In contemporary authors we still read the praises of Parnell, of Mallet, of Ambrose Phillips, and of many others inferior even to those ; and Johnson has written the *Lives* of several whose productions would hardly gain admittance in the corner of a provincial newspaper. Even the biographer himself, who, whatever may have been his taste, is too weighty to be easily reprehended, seems often to rest with the greatest complacency on poets the most inelegant and feeble ; and one might think that, in his estimation, Collins and Gray are no higher than Addison and Pomfret.”

In all this the just feeling is not more apparent than the correct taste.

But there is little more to praise. I will take only another sentence occurring towards the close, and which probably led to the suppression of what had been written with so much wise pains and foolish anger. After attacking Mr. Mathias and (with no very evident reason) Mr. D'Israeli, he speaks of the latter as claiming to be descended from an Italian family, and adds : “ He is one of the children of Israel nevertheless, as is also announced by the name.\* I mark this circumstance not by way of reproach, for in the number of my acquaintance there is none more valuable, there is not one more lively, more inquiring, more regular ; there is not one more virtuous, more beneficent, more liberal, more tender in heart or more true in friendship, than my friend Mocatta, — he also is a Jew.” It was on this being shown to Mr. Mocatta that he desired to read the whole, and the result was his successful appeal to Landor that it should be entirely suppressed. In such passages as I have now quoted it first sees the light.

A letter of Mr. Isaac Mocatta's may be added, which, besides its allusion to these matters, shows that already Landor was meditating a tragedy for the stage, and his friend had the sense to warn him, that, even if he got so far as the theatre door, the chamberlain would be

\* The writings of Mr. D'Israeli seem to me always deserving of respect ; and he valued, as well as did what he could to raise, the literary character. But some of his critical opinions had amazed Landor, who reprehends him also amusingly for his too great familiarity with learned men, as where he calls the great French printer *Henry Stephens*. “ Here let me inform this gentleman that though Scholars have sometimes taken this liberty, it is not allowed to other folks. He might as well call Cicero *Vetch*, and Fabius Maximus *Broad Bean*. Either *Henri Etienne*, which was his name, or *Henricus Stephanus*, as he wrote it in Latin, is the proper term. We cannot suppose that, coming over to England, he would have called himself *Henry Stephens*.”



sure to turn his key upon him. He dates from St. Thomas's Square, Hackney, on the 5th December, 1800.

"DEAR LANDOR, — I cannot a moment delay (notwithstanding I feel much indisposed) to express how kindly I take your resolution of suppressing the *Postscript to Gebir* which gave me so much pain. In so doing you have paid me a compliment which I know how to value. Since my last, I have given your work a perusal which I do not intend shall be the last; for, like a scientific piece of music, it will probably gain by repetition. It appears to me, however, more likely to please highly some few than to be generally tasted. The typographic errors are at least as numerous as you mention; but I did not include in them *wherefor*, which, if you recollect, I stated as a peculiarity. Though I had never thought on the subject before, it immediately struck me as proper, 'wherefor' being only by elision 'where is the reason or motive for.' Most undoubtedly a tragedy replete with sentiments such as you could not help to infuse, would not be received by the manager or sanctioned by the Lord Chamberlain; so that I much wish you could hit on some other plan more lucid and better brought out than you have hitherto produced. For I honestly think your talents equal to the greatest undertaking; but I dread that impetuosity which disdains those minor niceties of language which are yet necessary to show where the narrative stands and what is going on. Are you not too profound and classical for most readers? I think I discover that your imagination has been warmed in more than one instance by Painting. By the by, do not construe my approbation to extend to your encomiums on pride and revenge. Adieu. Yours,

IS. MOCATTA."

## V. SERGEANT ROUGH.

Unhappily Landor soon lost the advantage of so wise a friend as Isaac Mocatta, his illness proving fatal in the following year; but an extract from one of his earlier letters may be added, as it touches another subject of difference between them. "I thank you," Mocatta had written in July, 1800, "for sparing me the triumph of Buonaparte's laurels. Had the event been as decisively the other way, I am afraid I could not have refrained from teasing you a little. The Corsican boy has certainly proved himself a man. May he crown his victories by dictating a moderate Peace! I assure you, if I feel for the disappointment of the country I do not for that of Mr. Pitt. I was reading lately Plutarch's essay on the character of Alexander, arguing that fortune was his enemy instead of friend, and that his successes were but equal to his merit. Some of his reasoning I felt as a silent reproof of my own condemnation of Buonaparte." The time was, nevertheless, approaching when the occasion for reproof was reversed, and it was Landor who condemned the ambition and execrated the successes of Napoleon.

In July, 1801, Mr. Jacob Mocatta announced his brother's death to Landor, to whom had been bequeathed some books from his library (among them a rare *Sophocles*) and a Prometheus in ancient sculpture, which, with his usual vehement appreciation for a friend's gift,

Landor declared to be by Phidias, and which is now the property of his brother Henry. "I never knew a better or wiser man, or one more friendly," is his indorsement of the letter that told him of the death and the bequest. Mocatta had just lived long enough to see the Peace which he had hoped might be a temperate one, and which proved to be the one of which everybody was glad and nobody proud.

Landor received Mr. Jacob Mocatta's letter when lodging at Oxford, where his brother Robert was now in residence ; and the greater part of this year was passed between Oxford and London, where the peace and Addington's ministry furnished occupation for everybody. One other affair, however, Landor had found also time to take in hand, and there is allusion to it in a letter of the following year to his brother Henry. "This time year, too, I was to have been married" (he is referring to the recent marriage of Rough). "But, after committing a piece of foolery in which I was the puppet, the farce concluded. But what can it signify ? I can only be sixty thousand pounds the poorer," — the peculiarity of such expressions in his case being, that they import nothing which in conduct he is careful to contradict, but may in general be taken not unfairly as the measure of what he did as well as said. No man whom I have ever known of intellect approaching to his could so recklessly rush into the gravest enterprises, or so carelessly make escape from them.

With Rough he was now very intimate, and something must be said of their friendship. When Landor first knew him he had just left college, and in a fit of admiration for *Gebir* had written in the manner of it a tragedy on the Conspiracy of Gowrie which was about as like Landor as Mr. Rowe's imitation was like Shakespeare. When I first heard his name, his poem was extinct ; but its author was remembered as one of three notorious radicals of the Midland circuit, Copley and Denman being the other two, of whom it was proposed by old Clarke, also of the Midland, that the whole three should be hung up as republicans to the sign-post of their circuit inn with Copley in the centre as the greatest malefactor of the three. Both literature and politics, therefore, recommended Rough to Landor.

Copley was a little his junior ; but they had been at Cambridge together, were members of the same inn of court, chose the same circuit, and for some time were inseparable. But Rough's ambition, more limited in one direction than his friend's, took in a greater variety of objects, and had a more generous though a weaker side. What so many inferior people discover in the desire to attach themselves to the wealthy and noble, this young lawyer displayed in his eagerness to become acquainted with men distinguished by their literature ; and though his life had many failures, his persistent love of men of learning and letters is not to be accounted one of them. "He became familiar," says Mr. Robert Landor, "with the lake poets, especially with Southey ; and with many of the younger peo-



ple before the age of Scott, Byron, and Shelley. He was an intense admirer of Walter's *Gebir*, and I think that Walter and Southey became ultimately acquainted through him. Before then he had published a tragedy called *The Conspiracy of Gowrie*. My brother repaid his admiration; for in such duties he was never ungrateful. Hence their very ardent friendship; but Rough was still more familiar with my brother Henry, who was then resident in London. When called to the bar, Mr. Rough selected the Midland circuit; and about the same time Henry was established at Warwick as a conveyancer, which profession he exchanged for that of a land agent to some very large estates."

Of the few of Rough's letters that Landor kept, the first is of the date of 1801, and explains a delay in replying to one of Landor's by showing that the answer had gone to Oxford, missed him there, and come back to London. With anxious care he explains these crosses, and very eagerly prays his friend to believe that very few things would vex him more than the loss of the friendship Landor had once encouraged him to hope would be extended to him.

"From letters and the pursuits of imagination I have, since I saw you, been widely sundered. A few law books have been my sole companions: and naturally not endowed with much animation, I from long habit am now *gryllo hebetior*. For your 'lampoon' on Lord Warwick I thank you, and was not a little diverted by it. In truth, however, I am displeased with with you for courting the least pleasing of the Nine, when so many others of the beauteous sisters would be gratified by your suit. He who retains in his cabinet shells gathered from the Sun's palace-porch should not defile his collection with dirty funguses. I am running on, however, with the confidence of a man forgiven, forgetful that my pardon is not yet assured to me."

His next letter, consisting wholly of expressions of delight at a communication from Landor, and making return in kind for friendly Latin verses, we may assume the completeness of the pardon; and one of his confessed reasons for choosing the Midland circuit a few months later was the hope of thereby meeting his friend from time to time in Warwickshire. The letter that announced this purpose was written early in 1802.

"I have chosen the Midland circuit as that which professionally is as likely to be serviceable as any other; and as I am not very sanguine of expectation on the score of interest, I solaced myself by raising enchanted visions of Friendship and Literature. With these floating across my brain, I called on your brother Henry, who tells me that he fears you will before the 23d of March have quitted Warwickshire. Now, my dear Landor, if you wish me not to be utterly discomfited, contrive to remain there a few days longer than you at present intend, and let me at least have one hour of Poetry and Imagination during my grave and weary pilgrimage. Seriously, I shall be sorry not to see you. I am likely to have a sort of prefatory and introductory letter to a Dr. Lambe, who is represented to me to be a man on many accounts most worth knowing. Your brother says you

have a friend of that name. If it be so, I shall assuredly not reject the opening. In the mean while if you have any select companions indicted for rape or horse-stealing, I shall be happy on your account to exert myself professionally in their behalf. God be with you, and teach you to deem me ever your obliged and sincere friend, W. Rough. I have done nothing of late but write an indifferent prologue for Lewis's tragedy. And you too are idle ! ”

Better be idle than writing lampoons ; and that Landor more recently had neither been wholly unoccupied, nor occupied so badly, will appear at the proper time. On this first of Rough's circuits the friends did not meet ; but the busy lawyer had a warm greeting from the Landor family, and found that what had been told him of Doctor Lambe was true. This young physician had succeeded to the practice of Doctor Landor on his retirement ; for him and his pretty wife Landor himself had a strong liking ; and in his friend's letter immediately after the circuit they found very cordial mention.

“ I was much, very much, pleased with my reception at Warwick. You know, I suppose, that Lambe and myself dined at Parr's, and that he was very communicative and good-humored. Except that (as men of his age and character are apt to think) he seemed to suppose young men less read than they are now usually found to be, he showed not one false sentiment. From your own family I received more attention than in any way I could have expected ; and I had enough talk with Lambe to assure myself that he was no ordinary man. His wife, as you say, is an angel. All indeed was fairer than my hopes, and I say this without a single fee. I regret that I shall not see you in town. Is there, think you, a probability of my finding you at Warwick in July ? I trust there is.”

One other acquaintance was then also made by Rough ; a further acquisition of that first circuit, though not mentioned in this letter, which especially claims to be mentioned here. The reader owes to it a delightful sketch of the young lawyer himself, taken by a keen yet kindly observer, at this opening of his career.

“ Rough learnt from our family,” writes Mr. Robert Landor to me, “ on his first visit to Warwick, that there was another brother resident in Oxford ; and on his way back to town he paid me a visit too, quite unexpectedly. In more than sixty years which have passed since then, I have never met with any one who had so little reserve. In about an hour I had become acquainted with all his prospects, literary and professional ; and in this first circuit he had taken the measure of all his future competitors. At no time was he arrogant or contemptuous ; but, giving ample credit to the pretensions of other people, he did equal justice to his own. In addition to the honor which he conferred upon so young a man, I felt delighted with so much frankness, good-humor, and joyous familiarity. I again met him on his second circuit at Warwick, accompanied by Mr. Copley : both of them dined with my brother Henry. Walter was not there. Rough assumed the superiority which his greater standing and experience had given him ; for he had received a brief that very morning.



He promised his future countenance to Copley as his junior, and Copley undertook to prepare himself for the favor by ascertaining the distinction between a drake and a duck. It seemed that Rough had opened the prosecution of a thief who had stolen a drake; and Rough persisted in describing the bird as a duck. Corrected again and again, he repeated the word 'duck' in court; and after dinner he maintained that there was no difference. Copley said that there was the same difference as between a bull and a cow; the bull and the drake being the husbands of the cow and the duck; and also, that if any thief had stolen a bull, the animal must be so described, and not as a cow. I would have spared you this silliness, if it had not been characteristic both of Rough's habits and of his future fortune. Many years after these jests, I became acquainted, at Tenby, with an elderly solicitor of high professional character who was personally also familiar with Rough. He mentioned that the two friends had recently obtained promotion, and regretted that one of them had hazarded a small practice by becoming Mr. *Sergeant* Rough. Both gained the same rank at nearly the same time. My informant said that Copley was quite safe; but that Rough was so careless and slovenly in his practice that the conduct of any important case could not be intrusted to him. I had left Warwickshire, and had seen him but two or three times since my departure. My brother Henry always described him as not less happy and hopeful, — with so many plans, literary and professional, that he began none of them. He was so busy that he did nothing."\*

Mr. Landor adds a remark upon the sudden and early close of Rough's intimacy with his brother, so ardent while it lasted, which I do not feel entitled to omit. To a great degree in all men the earlier and the later years explain each other; and what is here said of a point of character which time and experience corrected, but failed to the very last to remove, will suggest needful allowance for what is to be said hereafter.

"Rough's intercourse with Walter lasted only three or four years. It was ended by some unintentional offence similar to that by Dr. Winthrop at Parr's. Either Rough had smiled at a false argument, or interrupted my brother in some other way, before several guests, whereupon Walter left his house and renounced his acquaintance. Your intercourse did not begin till many years, and a larger knowledge of society, had taught more self-control; and he must have felt more afraid, as well as unwilling, to offend you. But not twenty years ago he refused ever to see again a school-fellow whom he valued almost as highly as Birch. It seems ungrateful on my part to remember these frailties, — for, long after our early affection had ceased, he endured much more patiently my remonstrances and re-

\* One thinks of Chaucer's pleasant couplet in *his* picture of a lawyer of his time:—

"No wher so besy a man as he ther n'as,  
And yit he semede besier than he was."

proaches than those of any other persons, being resolved that we should never quarrel again as we had done almost forty years ago. Yet such knowledge is necessary if you would describe him truly. It was for the sake of his peace and reputation that I so often gave, or hazarded, offence."

Nor had Rough scrupled to hazard it as well, during the time of their intercourse. His high admiration for Landor's powers, cherished all the more because shared by so very few, made him keen to the perception of faults that obstructed their healthful exercise; and, genial, careless, good-natured as he was, he remonstrated more than once against complaints which he justly thought not the most manly. The Werterism of that day was the Byronism of a quarter of a century later; but though Landor had to pass through this and other distempers of youth, happily they left no mark upon his writings. There is a tone in Rough's remonstrances that commands respect and sympathy.\*

"Dimmer than my eyes have been for this many a day," he writes, "would they now be, my dear Landor, if I believed your letter from Bath written in other than a casual and momentary distemperature. No, no, my friend, I cannot and will not think but that you have strength enough to fight against the sleepless nights you speak of. This world of ours, if not a world of chrysolite, is notwithstanding a bawble worth our looking at; and he who plays with the trinket is surely wiser than he who sits in a corner and cries for the moon, which is out of his reach. . . . Come, come, rouse yourself and write. If you must die, it is at least your duty to leave something behind you; and though *Gebir* will do much, yet I am persuaded it is in your power to do still more. Literature, like other things, as often obtains the reward of praise by quantity as quality; and we are all of us so little important to others, that unless we put them in mind of us daily, we shall scarcely avoid being forgotten. It is strange that you should be so insensible to the advantages you possess as you seem to be. I am hourly rating my hard fate, that compels me to pursue a profession in which Letters rather impede than assist, and in which I am forced to exert much benevolence to save me from despising most of my co-laborers. You, on the other hand, are at liberty to move whithersoever inclination leads, — with a more than adequate competence now, and with an assurance of a richer fortune in years to come; with the possession, not merely of the love, but the power, of intellect; with the consciousness that you are pursuing that which such beings as Homer, Virgil, and Milton have cultivated before you; and with a chance of gaining the reward which they have gained. I address you thus freely because I suspect not only that you, but that our friend Lambe is a little tinctured with that sickness of mind which prompts us to fret at the seeming respect paid to those who sleep on gilded sofas and whose houses are castles, — sofas pressed by illiterate indolence, and castles inhabited by folly. In all else he is faultless. His wife, as you have said, is an angel. . . . I will not add to your naturally disobedient spirit by urging you to read, from which you tell me you are severely prohibited. But that the cause of that prohibition may

\* The letter is dated "May, Thursday 13th (1801), 10 Farrar's Buildings, Inner Temple."



speedily be removed, I *do* most earnestly pray. Believe me your grateful and affectionate friend, W. Rough."

Anticipating my narrative a little, I may add that before the middle of the following year Rough's bachelor life had ended, and, in thanking Landor for good wishes sent to him, he had rallied his friend again upon his tone of despondency, adjured him for Heaven's sake to keep up his spirits, and, with much grateful allusion to Doctor Landor and the house at Warwick, expressed his hope to be in a few weeks settled in a house of his own, where he should at all times be eager to receive, and when necessary to nurse, the friend to whom he owed so much. "My Henrietta I have at present left in the country. Be assured, however, that she is fully disposed to welcome you as the most valued of her husband's friends." His Henrietta was Jack Wilkes's daughter; and Mr. Robert Landor's brief allusion to her, and to the leading points of the later life of her husband, must satisfy whatever further interest my readers may feel in Landor's once celebrated, now forgotten friend, Chief-Justice Rough.\*

"Mr. Rough had married an illegitimate daughter of the patriot John Wilkes; attracted rather by the father's celebrity than the daughter's beauty. When he and I first met at Warwick, he proposed to travel a hundred miles by the stage-coach that he might attend a Christmas ball, and dance with Doctor Parr's daughter, whom he had never seen. As had been foretold, while Mr. Copley's profession advanced, Mr. Rough's receded, — and now he is a family man. Very reluctantly, he relinquished his hopes of a seat in the House of Commons, — as solicitor-general, attorney-general, on his way to better things. *Then* he would find leisure to begin, at last, a

\* Since this page was in type I have received also some interesting recollections of Rough from my old friend Sir Frederick Pollock confirmatory on every point of Mr. Landor's sketch. "He became a sergeant on the 30th of May, 1808, before I settled in London. He was in a batch of sergeants with William Manley, and with Albert Pell, who afterwards led the Western circuit and became a judge in bankruptcy. Five years later, in July, 1813, Copley became a sergeant, and immediately extinguished Rough on his circuit; compelling him to seek for a maintenance in some judicial appointment abroad. He was made, first, chief justice of Demerara; where (as usual) the lawyer-judge quarrelled with the soldier-governor about some question of feminine precedence, the governor taking out some lady before the judge's wife: and here, I think, Rough lost his wife. But to go back to 1808. I used to hear a great deal, and see a little, of him in the society of Mrs. Barbauld, Lucy Aikin, Mr. Aikin (son of the Doctor), and Mrs. Aikin (daughter of Gilbert Wakefield). They all had the highest opinion of him, and expected him to be a great success at the bar: nor were his claims contemptible. His countenance was pleasing, his voice agreeable, his conversation lively; if not powerfully, he talked always well and fluently, and in public his command of language never failed him; but for great business he was unfit. He was more literary than legal, and had more elegance than strength. From what I used always to hear of his strong affections, his good temper, and amiable character, I can understand a great intimacy between him and Landor or Mackintosh, — such as exists between the vine and the forest-trees that support it. I never saw his verses, but they were greatly commended by Miss Burges and the *οἱ ἀμφί*. In 1813 I married, and saw very little more of *that* literary society, which seemed to meet merely that they might praise each other. I saw Rough's declining business, and heard with pleasure of his appointment. He did not return to the bar; and I think I never saw him again. He died chief justice of Ceylon."

very great poem ! Perhaps it was through the interest of the first Lord Lansdowne that he became chief justice in one of the West Indian Islands ; but his heart was left for the House of Commons, and he soon returned to it. Some quarrel about precedency at the governor's ball, between Mrs. Rough and the wife of a general or colonel who commanded the garrison there, was decided unsatisfactorily ; and the chief justice, if such was his title, returned to England. I think that by this time Copley had succeeded Lord Eldon as lord chancellor ; and if so, there were few men who could congratulate him more sincerely than Rough ; for Rough seemed quite incapable of jealousy, and his own turn must come soon. Meanwhile he could not resume his former practice, and he had, I believe, two or three children. It was thought, unjustly, that his old friend might have forwarded his wishes more effectually by obtaining for him some such appointment as would keep him at home. But it is not improbable that the lord chancellor may have doubted his qualification for much responsibility so near to the House of Commons ; and Rough never changed his political opinions, as Copley had done. At last, Mr. Rough was constrained to accept the chief-justiceship of Ceylon. There he lost his wife ; and after the customary residence his own health failed, and for its restoration he returned to England. My brother Henry saw him, but I did not ; and I must caution you against too much confidence in my accuracy after more than fifty years. I cannot consult my brother, as his memory is far worse than mine ; and we have outlived all our contemporaries. Unable to accomplish such an exchange as he desired, Mr. Rough returned to Ceylon, and died there. He was kind, friendly, social ; and of much more than average capacity : but too whimsical for much success even as a poet."

How many a like career may we read in this, of brilliant design and imperfect execution, of the eagerness without the purpose to excel, of judgment ready for a friend's guidance and insufficient for our own, and yet of ardent hopes so surviving every disappointment as to be themselves no mean compensation for all.

## VI. CORRESPONDING WITH PARR AND ADAIR.

When Southey was at Cintra in the summer of 1800 he had written to his friend Humphry Davy at Bristol : "I see the author of *Gebir* has been translating from the Arabic and Persian. Can there possibly be Arabic and Persian poetry which the author of *Gebir* may be excused for translating ?" \* This was another of those "little

\* In a letter to Mr. Crabb Robinson of the 26th April, 1836, writing of Goethe's translations and translators, he adds : "It is curious that, when I was about three-and-twenty, I wrote some poetry in imitation of the Persian and Arabic. Few copies, I believe, were printed, and perhaps none sold. I never thought of making an inquiry about them. There are three or four of Hafiz not bad,—I question where there is anything else positively good in the whole range of Eastern poetry, except the Jewish." Two-and-twenty years later he reproduced some of these imitations (*Dry Sticks*), with the



publications" of which his brother has spoken, hastily conceived, more hastily printed, forgotten as soon as published, yet with fancies and thoughts that deserved more careful presentment and a longer life. It was not from the Arabic and Persian at all, but was a very clever imitation of such specimens of Eastern literature as were then derived chiefly through French translations; and consisting altogether of not more than twenty quarto pages, was accompanied by notes in about an equal number that might have set by the ears as many score of learned combatants, if the notice drawn to them had borne any kind of proportion to the loudness of the demand made for it. But as their scholarship attracted nobody, it was quite as well that what else they contained should have passed unchallenged. The thing fell dead-born, no one caring even to raise a doubt of the authenticity of the so-called Orientalisms; and Landor used always to say that the imposition certainly had succeeded with Parr. The old scholar was never an adept at poetry, and his brain was just now occupied and overfilled with politics.

"My good friend," runs one of his notes at this time (Landor being in London), "pray go to the House. I have prepared Mr. Adair for an interview with you, — as a man of intellect, and my valuable friend. Call on him in Great Marlborough Street, and leave a card. The mighty are *not* fallen, but they have descended to avoid being pushed down now, and to secure being raised up hereafter. God bless you. Mrs. Parr desires her kind regards. We often talk of you, Walter. I am truly yours, S. Parr."

"The mighty" were Mr. Pitt and his friends Windham, Grenville, and Dundas, who had just retired to make room for Mr. Addington. The whole business is now so completely dead and gone that it would only try the reader's patience to tell him how Pitt, in carrying the Union, is alleged to have made promises to the Irish Catholics which he could neither keep nor break with decency; how he was thereupon supposed to have had nothing for it but to quit the seat of power for a time, putting somebody in to keep it warm and disengaged till he should be able to return to it; and how it was that thus came about that ludicrous thing called the Addington Administration. But though all the animation and interest have gone out of it now, it was once filled vividly with both; and the best kind of notion I can give of Landor's pursuits and habits of thought at this time in connection with it will be derived from a few extracts of letters then addressed to him, and of letters written by himself.

Truth to say, however, this is not an easy task, with Parr's letters at least. It is as difficult to decipher his handwriting\* as to connect

remark that they had originated in a friend's having observed to him, on his seeming to undervalue the Orientals, that he should be glad to see how any one would succeed in an attempt to imitate them.

\* "You always wrote hieroglyphically," says Charles Lamb to George Dyer, "yet not to come up to the mystical notations and conjuring characters of Doctor Parr." And for an amusing illustration of Parr's hieroglyphics, see *Rogers's Table-Talk*, p. 64.

his sentences when deciphered. He has twelve words where one would do, and as many seventhlies and lastlies for every division of a subject as one of the old Puritan preachers. In vehemence as well as abundance of language, too, his example was a bad one for Landon ; whose own self-sufficient way of judging both men and things, if at this time happily restrained rather than encouraged by any one whose judgment he respected, might not have grown into the unfortunate habit which tyrannized over him in later years. Certainly no lessons were to be drawn from Parr, either of prudence in forming opinions or moderation in expressing them.

Upon the first news of Pitt's resignation he wrote to Landon to expose what he called the deep and mischievous craft of the impostor. He wanted it laid open to the public in parliamentary speeches, in newspaper paragraphs, in general conversation, and in political pamphlets ; and with a view to each and all, Landon was to do what he could. Again and again the alarm was to be sounded in every quarter ; and in every quarter were to be proclaimed the aggravations of his misbehavior to the king and the Irish. He had betrayed the king and insulted the Irish, he had betrayed the Irish and insulted the king. But it should all be ripped up in the House of Commons. Why did he pledge himself to the Irish without consulting the king ? Why did he not consult the king before pledging himself to the Irish ? If he did consult the king, who was to blame ? If he did not consult the king, what was the reason ? If he expected assent, then had he most wantonly brought the king into a scrape. If, at the moment of consultation, he expected *dissent*, then, at the moment of action, he must have intended to compel *assent*. And so, to give but a few faint echoes of a letter that would take as many pages to print as are here compressed in lines, and as many weeks completely to decipher, the excited old Whig seesaws through a bill of indictment against the retiring minister, to which he wishes Landon to give all the "attractiveness of his style, all the power of his eloquence, and all the bitterness of his sarcasm."

Landon nevertheless had some difficulty, which it was the object of a second letter to remove ; and from this I am able to extract, with sufficient compendiousness, ten several heads of accusation, which, after due time for reflection, Parr submitted as the objects Pitt must have had in view, and the advantages he had proposed to himself, in resigning. The shrewdness of the matter and pomposity of the manner are Parr all over.

"I will enumerate the advantages he hopes to derive. 1. Public attention is turned from the perils of war to the change of administration. 2. Pitt will rise by comparison with the weakness of his successors ; and, while action is suspended, his power to act will be forced upon men's memories, sifted in their conversations, and enlarged in their imaginations, by contrast with notorious incapacity ; and thus he escapes from their anger, he diverts that anger to other objects, and he recalls to our minds the brighter parts



of his character at a crisis when every man feels that ministerial talents are necessary for national safety. 3. He has carried off his whole strength in a mass, and in a mass he will preserve it, that it may be brought again into action in a mass. 4. He has gone out in defence of a popular measure, and the circumstance will secure a stout party in Ireland, and will not be unwelcome to the sectaries of England. 5. He has thrown the whole responsibility upon the junto and the king; so as to induce a suspicion that he neither has been nor will be governed by that secret and mischievous Cabal, which controlled his father, which excludes Mr. Fox, and to which, as their primary source, all the disasters of the reign are usually traced up. 6. His descending orb is surrounded with that glory which accompanied its meridian height, for it is he who with magnanimity conducts the loan, and it is he upon whose wisdom the money-holders rely. 7. He has contrived to show the inflexibility of the king's mind towards the Whigs, when in preference to them even the weakest persons are called into office, at a most dangerous juncture. And this consideration will have its due weight with the selfish and corrupt Parliament. 8. By his organ Lord Grenville he has instructed his followers what part they are to take in supporting the same principles under the guidance of other men, and consequently he forbids them to prepare for acting according to other principles with the members of opposition. 9. He will assume an air of moderation; he will affect not to clog the wheels of government; he will claim the merit of assisting measures which he no longer guides; he will find in them opportunities sometimes for vindicating his own, when they were similar, and sometimes for praising his own, when they were better; and thus he will encourage the superficial to believe, and the cunning to maintain, that his ambition and his resentment are quelled by his disinterested loyalty and unfeigned patriotism. Finally, he knows that between himself and his sovereign there is only one strong point of difference; but that between his rivals and the crown there is not only the same point of difference with greater provocations, but other points of even superior magnitude from which Mr. Fox will never swerve, and to which the king will never accede. He therefore has quitted his power at a time when it was most difficult to retain it, and when he could take the best preparatory measures for resuming it; and, at the moment of resuming it, he will convert the odium of beginning and misconducting the war into popularity by making the peace."

These were the texts he would have Landor write upon. Even yet the mischief might be stayed. In the matter of the old Tories Pitt had been reckoning without his host. They would be inflamed by all this. If proper measures were taken, never was a period more favorable for hunting him down; and never such a favorable period for his return to power, if such measures were *not* taken. Some misgiving, nevertheless, whether Landor was the man to take them, and whether he could be trusted for not straying too far afield, creeps into the letter. "I wish," says Parr, "you would expand the matter contained in this letter, and publish it in the *Courier*, and lay out upon it that vigorous eloquence with which you often charm my ears. It will have effect, if you will keep back some of your favorite and perhaps erroneous opinions." There were also other difficulties that made Landor not very manageable. From the earlier attempts to

get him into regular harness, and put him under proper leaders, he seems to have shied and bolted incessantly. "Why," asks Parr, in the same letter, "don't you go down to the House? I will give you letters of introduction to men you will like; and from the civility of being introduced by them into the House, why should you shrink?" These strenuous efforts are not without their effect, and we see him at the House at last under charge of Adair.

But before turning to the letters of that stanchest of Whigs, a few further notes may be given from those of Landor and Parr. Here is an acknowledgment from the young poet of the old scholar's suggestions and praise:—

"I am rejoiced to find that you have not forgotten me, and I raise myself up from the bosom of indifference to the voice and the blandishments of praise. I never court the vulgar, and how immense a majority of every rank and description this happy word comprises! Perhaps about thirty in the universe may be excepted, and never more at a time. But I know how to value the commendation you bestow on me; for, though I have not deserved it, nor so largely, yet it will make me attempt to conquer my idleness, my disgust, and to reach it some time or other. You will find that I have taken courage to follow the path you pointed out, in pursuing the execrable [Pitt]. I subjoin my letter. At present I have not sent it to the printer, though it has been finished a fortnight. The reason is this: I wrote one a thousand times better than the present, in which I aimed my whole force at a worse man than [Pitt],—there are only two, and it was not W[indham],—and I sent it for insertion to the *Courier*. Now, such is my indifference, that, when once I have written a thing, I never inquire for it afterwards; and this was the case in respect to my letter. I have not seen the *Courier* since, but I have some suspicion that it was not inserted."

That is just the man as he was known to me forty and fifty years later: fancying always that he could place himself "on a hill apart" even from those with whom he was actually contending; and mistaking for indifference, both to opinions and to consequences, what was but exaggerated impatience of contradictory opinion and a running away from consequences.

What the tone of his letters to the *Courier* is likely to have been, we are not without hints of:—

"Did Mr. Pitt expect, or did he not, the royal assent to his transaction with the Irish? I hardly know in which instance of the two his crime would be the greater. If he did *not*, how gross the deception; how deep and unpardonable the insult; how cruel and killing a mockery!"

To which Parr rejoins in a letter taking a less favorable view than before of Pitt's chances of success in his "diabolical" scheme. The peace had now been made by Addington, and that advantage lost to his expecting heir and successor:—

"Pitt has insulted the king by pledging his word; he has betrayed him by throwing responsibility upon him for the disappointment of the Irish. He means to compel the sovereign to recall his former ministers when the



inefficiency of their successors appears to the crown, the Parliament, and the country; and when the alternative lies between Pitt, who contends only for one point, and Fox, who will insist upon many. But he cannot recover his popularity with the nation; he cannot regain all his strength in Parliament; he cannot efface our remembrance of the war, by seizing upon office to make the peace; and yet he may re-establish his influence over the mind of his sovereign. My friend, we have gained one point by these struggles between the ministry and the junto; and the people, if they are wise, will direct their suspicions, indignation, and resistance against both. I wish you would look into the second book of Xenophon's *Ἑλληνικά* for the character of Meno. Many but not all the circumstances have the very strongest resemblance. Pray consider this last passage, for it luminously describes the subserviency of arrogance to cunning in the bosom of this man. . . . My printing goes on but slowly. You estimate rightly the great intellectual power of Mr. Wynne. Catherine [Parr's daughter] is at Mackintosh's, No. 14 Searle Street. She leaves town in a day or two, and you may send any message by her. Watch what is passing. Mrs. Parr joins me in best wishes and best thanks. I am, my dear Walter, ever your friend, S. Parr." \*

I have spared the reader, there, ten lines of Xenophon; though Greek is more legible than English in the writing of Parr, and a substantial scrap interlarded from the ancients is some help to his own puffs and pastry. But he carried the habit to excess, as he did most things; and Holofernes himself was not more ridiculous in chopping and changing for Latin or Greek the baldest phrases of his mother tongue than this genuine scholar often was. See how he acknowledges a gift from Landor:—

"I have been eager to acknowledge the *βαθὺ χρέος* under which you have laid Mrs. Parr and myself by the present of a very instructive book; and of maps the most accurate, the most splendid, and the most interesting that ever came into my possession."

See also how he talks, or perorates, about the peace:—

"True it is that by the cessation of hostilities there will be less flutter of curiosity and less anxiety of expectation than we felt during the war. But, in a calmer and a more permanent and a more pleasing state of mind, we can now trace the progress of the victors and the retreat of the vanquished. There will be a mellowness in our satisfaction and a distinctness in our conceptions that will amply compensate for the want of those feelings which accompany perturbation, and therefore partake of hope and fear, and of rapture and agony. Glad shall I be when you sit down with us again, and chat on the virtues of Moreau, the talents of Buonaparte, the humors of Paul, and the perilous condition of this oppressed and insulted kingdom. As to late events, the ostensible is not the sole nor the chief cause of Mr. Pitt's plot,

*ἔσται λέων ὅπη χρῆ· καὶ πίθηκος ἐν μέρει,"*

[which I may translate to the effect that Pitt was to play the lion's part when necessary, and the monkey's in division of spoil]. "The wrangle

\* Addressed to "Walter Landor, Esq., at R. Bevan's, Esq., No. 10 Boswell Court, Carey Street." April, 1801.

about indulgence to Catholics, the resignation of the old ministry, the appointment of the new, the strength studiously abducted from them, the compliments bestowed upon them, the assistance solicited for them, and the principles imputed to them, are one and all mere *Θεσσαλά σοφίσματα*. Rely upon it, sooner or later, Paul will have Malta, the French will have Egypt, and the Mamelukes will justify the proverb, *δεινοὶ πλέκτειν τοι*, &c., &c." [I spare the reader more.]

Nor was Landor loath to pay him back the same liberal largess for kindnesses expected or received. The old scholar was just now publishing his Spital Sermon, and had promised Landor a copy ; having given him a few months before a small Catullus, which more than half a century later I saw, still cherished, in his hands. Here is characteristic acknowledgment of both :—

"It is a sign that I have conversed with hardly a human being, not to know that your Sermon was published! As you intend to make me a present of one, pray do not keep it for me, but send it me directly. I wish for all enjoyment at once. I wish, while I improve my judgment and my taste, to indulge my sentiment and affections in contemplating the present of my friend. I have a little Catullus,—I can repeat every word of it; yet again and again do I read my little Catullus. I never knew the author, and I should not have esteemed him if I had, unless as the most exquisite of poets. Do I not know the author of the sermon? Do I not esteem him far, infinitely, more than for being the most elegant and energetic of our writers? I hope this noble work, for I can speak of as much as I have seen, will be effectual in making Englishmen write English. Our language is bruised, as it were, and swollen by the Latin; but it is contaminated, enervated, and distorted by the French! If we are to borrow, let us borrow from the principal and not from the underlings; but with a little good management I think we are quite rich enough."

Catullus again and again recurs in the letters of both. Landor had questioned a word in that delightful writer: Parr promptly replies :—

"I looked into my Catullus, and can relieve you from all doubts about 'typanum.' In Mattaire's *Corpus Poetarum* it is printed 'typanum,' and that is the true reading. It is a Grecism, and furnishes an additional probability that some Greek word was in the mind of the Roman writer. Scaliger reads 'typanum,' and quotes from Homer,—the line is in his hymn to the Mater Deorum. Scaliger quotes also from Apollonius Rhodius."

The letter bristles with Greek and Latin, which I do not inflict upon the reader; passes into a disquisition on the metre of Catullus, with a sketch to show the rhythm and its variations; and closes thus :—

"The cretic foot, whether in 'typanum' or 'cymbelum,' is quite inadmissible in the beginning of the galliambic. It retards the progress. I will show you Jortin's remarks. He errs once or twice; but he reads 'typanum.'"

As Landor went on writing he seems at times to have even bettered



the instruction of his uncompromising old "pastor and master" in party warfare. Remarking on one of his political satires which Landor had sent him, Parr thinks "the composition animated, but the notes *rather too* acrimonious." Still he finds them spirited, and can sympathize with the indignant writer in the matter of Kotzebue. "But why attack the father? he was *not* a discarded player. The conclusion is fierce, but witty and just."

One or two glimpses of their more private intercourse may be added.

#### RETURN AFTER AN ABSENCE.

"I am very sorry that we missed each other when you called on me and I on you; and I am sure that if Walter Landor had gone into the penetrale of Hatton Parsonage, he would have found the Lares ready to welcome with a smile the return of an old and justly respected worshipper. Pray do you and Dr. Lambe dine with me next Sunday; and if you come in a chaise, cram little A—— into a corner."

The matter next adverted to has no sort of interest for us now, but seventy years ago was setting all the world at Warwick by the ears; and the colonel mentioned is the same we made acquaintance with in one of Mr. Robert Landor's letters. Indeed one may discern in the tone here taken by Parr, and what it reveals of the part in a personal dispute taken by Landor himself, some connection with allusions made in that letter.

#### ABOUT STONELEIGH LIVING.

"What a truth is there, and what lies, about Stoneleigh living! Upon one canticle of that Cyclean poem (for there is such a want of regularity in the structure, and of dignity in the agents, that I cannot call any part the episode of an epic), I would assume the office of a critic; strict indeed, but precise, as Aristarchus. Colonel Packwood certainly applied to Lord Hertford for his son; Lord Hertford certainly applied to the chancellor, but without mentioning Colonel Packwood's son; and Lord Hertford, if his application had been successful, certainly would not have given the living to Colonel Packwood's son. Colonel Packwood certainly knows these are the facts as well as I do, and before I did; nor would he, as a gentleman responsible for veracity and honor, ever attempt to dispute the correctness of one tittle of this my statement. You may say what I have said; and quote my authority for saying it positively. I am, dear Walter, truly yours, S. Parr."\*

What follows is later in date by a year or two; but it shows what a fierce enemy as well as fast friend this eager old man could be, and how genuine the regard was that Landor had inspired in him. The letter is very characteristic, and there is no need to supply the blank with a name.

#### AN OLD ASSOCIATE OF PARR'S AT HARROW.

"DEAR WALTER, — I have known —— for thirty-six years and more. But I do not like him; and, for various reasons in the politics of Harrow, we

\* "December 23, 1802."

are not on very amicable terms. A letter from me would do you no good. If there were the smallest chance of advantage or convenience to you, I would write to him. But he is not likely to fall into any measure because I take an interest in it. Write to him at once ; in this there is no trouble and can be no harm. I much doubt whether he would sell, or exchange ; and if he knew your genius, your attainments, your politics, your eloquence, and your dignified way of thinking and acting upon all subjects in private and public life, he would dread you, hate you, and drive you into the sea. I know him well, and he knows that I know him. But his son is a most high-minded, generous-hearted, clear and full-headed hero. He would do for a friend to you, or to myself. Harry is his name ; and he is a tutor at Harrow, and fellow of King's College, Cambridge. When Butler resigns, Harry shall be his successor, if my aid can effect so desirable an end. I am very well, and rather busy, and quite content with my own share of loss by the change of ministry. You hate Bonaparte. But I do not suspect you have any strong affection for George and his present advisers. . . . Farewell, God bless you, dear Walter. I am truly, ay with real and great respect and regard I am your friend, S. PARR."

My two closing extracts, from letters of the date of 1800 and 1801, concern persons more widely known.

#### A GLIMPSE OF SHERIDAN.

"Beware, dear Walter, of prophecies about politicians. On Friday at 3 P. M. I said, Sheridan will never meet me ! On that very day at 6 P. M. Sheridan came in where I was dining, on purpose to meet me. I sat with him enjoying my pipe after dinner, and he sat with his claret."

#### A PARTY AT MACKINTOSH'S.

"My Jemmy (Mackintosh) was delightful, and I will tell you who were with us. 1. A sturdy democratic yeoman. 2. A university bedel, who, I find, is always reading in the Bodleian, and who is a shrewd, argumentative, sceptical, anti-ministerial dog. 3. What is more surprising, a doctor of divinity ; whom I have known twenty-four years and not seen these ten ; who took his degree twenty years ago, and has not been at Oxford since ; who reads Greek well, has more Greek books than myself, makes war upon all bishops and archbishops, and is a rank, fire-away, uncompromising Whig in Church and State. These were our companions. There never was such good luck."

Adair's letters of this date in a great measure deal with the same circumstances ; but in the few extracts I give it will be possible to avoid repetition. Though he feels strongly, he writes always with ability and a command of temper ; and in him, even while yet he was a constant butt for the sarcasm of Canning and his friends, I seem to recognize the same quiet courteous gentleman whom I remember meeting at dinner at Holland House nearly forty years later. Here is one of his references to

#### THE DUKE OF PORTLAND'S DEFECTION.

"I have long ceased all intercourse, public or private, with the Duke of Portland ; and as my connection with him was one of the earliest of my



life, I am not ashamed to confess that my resentments are bounded by the wish of never seeing him more, or hearing the mention of his name. But he has forfeited all right to my interposition with others to spare him the reproaches which he has deserved from his country and from mankind."

Here he speaks of a subject in some degree affecting his loyalty as a Whig, but on which, with all his ardor in the cause, he could agree to differ with Landor.

#### WILLIAM THE DELIVERER.

"With regard to King William, I profess my gratitude to him to arise from public principle, and public principle alone; but having no other means of forming my judgment of his character than those which are common to everybody, I do not feel myself authorized to claim the concurrence of any man living who has the faculty of reasoning for himself. With your permission I will show your letter to Mr. Perry, but without mentioning your name."

It recurs briefly in a letter where he alludes to

#### PARR'S SERMON AND LANDOR'S NEWSPAPER WRITINGS.

"I sent your letter to Doctor Parr this day. I have the pleasure to tell you that he will be in town next week. As you may wish to read his sermon before his arrival, I take the liberty of sending you my copy. There are some noble passages in the notes. You seem not to be quite sure whether or no the editor of the *Courier* has rejected your letter. I will take the opportunity of looking at the file, and will let you know. The degraded state of the English press induces me to suspect that it has been omitted. I have no hesitation in saying for myself, and can answer for many of my friends, that we should have been much gratified to have seen it in print. I confess that I think better of King William than you seem to do, but perhaps I am a little blinded by my gratitude (to use a Godwinism). This however is but a difference of opinion, and cannot detract from the substantial merits of the writing. I am acquainted with the Editor of the *Courier*, but am almost sure that you would find an easy access to the *Morning Chronicle* if you would permit me to speak to Mr. Perry. I would not name this to you, did I not know Mr. Perry to be a man of inviolable honor. I will not vex you with praises, but only wish you to think as well of my judgment as you do of my patriotism and my politeness when I apply those praises to your compositions."

Landor's ability had made a strong impression on Adair, but he saw also his defects, and, as in a letter where he criticises one of his attacks on the new government, could give him wise and useful hints for guidance.

#### ADAIR TO LANDOR: A CORRECTION AND A WARNING.

"That the Catholics were 'promised' emancipation in the fair meaning of the word 'promise,' as the price of their support of the Union, I have not the smallest doubt; but since the positive denial of the fact in Parliament, I do not think we are authorized to state it as 'uncontroverted.' When you ask, very justly as I think, 'Where is the constitution but in the bosom of such affectionate and disinterested defenders as the solicitor-general?'

I am infinitely more afraid, I confess, of his reply *ex officio* as a lawyer than as a logician. Believe me the press is absolutely enslaved. Coupled with other sentences in your letter, which by innuendo might be laid as *tending* to bring the government into disrepute (a crime quite of modern date), I am afraid a jury might be found to condemn it. But, of all men, you have the least reason to despair as a public writer, for you possess such resources for escape in your powers of satire and of irony that you will always be able, as soon as you have found out the trim of the vessel, to state the strongest truths, and to state them safely."

One more subject, an appeal in arrest of judgment as to one of Landor's personal attacks, must close these extracts for the present. Landor, in one of his political letters on the defection of the Duke of Portland and his friends, had laughed at the Abbé Delille, at this time a refugee in London, much petted by the Whigs and bringing out a poem under their patronage. "The Abbé Delille ran away from his property, the Abbé Delille wrote some Georgics, and the Abbé Delille talks of Virgil." Commenting on this letter, and giving up the duke to its wrath, Adair writes to Landor : —

#### A WORD FOR THE ABBÉ DELILLE.

"I could much rather intercede for the poor old Abbé Delille, were it only because he had the boldness to defy Robespierre on his throne of blood, and to publish, I believe to recite before him, his fine verses on the immortality of the soul. The occasion of his writing them was as follows. In 1794, the Comité de Salut Public sent to him to compose some verses for a festival which they had ordered in honor of God, whom Robespierre had previously recognized by a decree of the Convention. Delille refused. It was told him that he had been permitted to live quietly at Paris till that time, but that those who had protected him might possibly not be able to protect him any longer if he persisted in his refusal. He composed, therefore, an ode, which he recited to some of them, in which are the following stanzas : —

' Dans sa demeure inébranlable  
Assise sur l'éternité  
La tranquille immortalité,  
Propice au bon, et terrible au coupable,  
Du tems qui, sous ses yeux, marche à pas de géant,  
Défend l'ami de la justice,  
Et ravit à l'espoir du vice,  
L'asile horrible du néant.

' O vous, qui de l'Olympe usurpant le tonnerre,  
Des éternels lois renversez les autels,  
Lâches oppresseurs de la terre,  
Tremblez — vous êtes immortels :  
Et vous — vous du malheur victimes passagères,  
Sur qui veillent d'un Dieu les regards paternels,  
Voyageurs d'un moment aux terres étrangères,  
Consolez vous — vous êtes immortels.'

If you have never seen these lines, nor heard of the anecdote before, the Abbé Delille may, perhaps, rise in your estimation. At all events I think I shall plead for him more successfully to you than Corneille would to the attorney-general. 'Sa probité stupide,' applied as you have applied it, would have been dangerous at any time; but would be particularly so at present, when the object of it has lost even the remnant of his wits."



Perhaps it may be owing to a favorable impression made thus early by this kindly plea of Adair for the good old abbé, that Landor made him afterwards an interlocutor in one of his imaginary dialogues. But he never conquered his own dislike of the French character and literature. It was one of his earliest and one of his latest peculiarities. The armed republic that was to change the face of the world had failed of its glorious mission; even the hopes he once built on Bonaparte he cherished no longer; and though eager to visit France as soon as peace was declared, and curious to see her first consul, it was with very little of that kind of sympathy for the hero of the eighteenth Brumaire and now supreme ruler of France which carried over at the same time Fox himself, Adair, and many eager followers.

#### VII. AT PARIS IN 1802.

Landor had declined all introductions; though letters had been offered him, as he told his brother, which would have opened to him the salons of the second consul Cambacérés, and of Berthier the minister of war. There was but one Frenchman he cared to see, and one portion of France. PARIS, as the great city looked so soon after the storm of the Revolution, with her Louvre filled by the spoils of Italy; and BONAPARTE, now consul for life; when these had been seen, he should at once return.

The precise time of his arrival was that to which Wordsworth's well-known sonnet has referred:—

“This is young Bonaparté's natal day,  
And his is henceforth an establist sway,  
Consul for Life.”

Upon the occasion when Bonaparte first publicly assumed the rank with which he had been thus invested, Landor saw him. Advantage had been taken of it for a great holiday, of which, as the young Englishman walked the streets, he saw everywhere the mighty preparation. Yet in the signs of enthusiasm presented outwardly there were curious contrasts. On the one hand, “The private houses were no more illuminated than usual. The shops had two lamps instead of one. This was the only difference.” On the other hand, “The palace of the government, the metropolitan church, the arches of the bridges, the bridges themselves and all the public edifices, were illuminated most magnificently.” That the enthusiasm had been specially got up for Paris, in short, quite as much as any other part of the ceremony, Landor had reason to suspect; and the suspicion became a certainty when the hero of the day made his appearance.

This was in the garden of the Tuileries; and in a letter to his brother Henry, now lying before me, he described the scene. At various points there had been built up pyramids of wood, each of the height of five-and-twenty feet, covered with lamps of extraordinary brilliancy. In the same manner were ornamented “the sides of several

pieces of water in which were fountains playing ; and there was not a statue nor an orange-tree of which you could not distinguish the minutest part. Seven rows of benches were erected over the grand flight of steps which leads into the palace, each containing forty performers, the first musicians in the world. Immediately above, at the height perhaps of thirty feet, sat the principal officers of state. On the leads which cover the colonnade the military guards were walking. Bonaparte made his appearance in the centre, where his wife had sat some time in company with the other two consuls. I expected that the sky would have been rent with acclamations. On the contrary, he experienced such a reception as was given to Richard the Third. He was sensibly mortified. All bowed, — but he waved to and fro, and often wiped his face with his handkerchief. He retired in about ten minutes.”

Landor’s own mortification could hardly have been less than Bonaparte’s. Not thus had he expected to see the man by whose astonishing career, up to this turning hour of it, all the world had been intralld ; the hero of Italy, by whom conflicting creeds were to be reconciled ; the armed leader of the French Revolution, by whom decaying nations were to be regenerated. Was it possible that he in whom such hopes had centred could now consent to become but another life-tenant of the Tuileries, changing the substance for the shadows of greatness ? In the same year and month when these letters were written by Landor, that question was sorrowfully put and answered by Wordsworth : —

“ I grieved for Bonaparté with a vain  
And an unthinking grief ! for who aspires  
To genuine greatness but from just desires,  
And knowledge such as *he* could never gain ? ”

Bluntly and characteristically, but to similar effect, Landor wrote off to his brother under the immediate influence of what Paris itself had shown him ; and it is worthy of note that amid his many changes of opinion, the opinion now formed of Napoleon, and of the people under his rule, was never afterwards materially changed. His point of view was not that of Wordsworth, and his wishes and aims were different ; but he had arrived substantially at the same result. “ Doubtless the government of Bonaparte,” he wrote, “ is the best that can be contrived for Frenchmen. Monkeys must be chained, though it may cost them some grimaces. If you have read attentively the last *senatus-consultum*, you will find that not an atom of liberty is left. This people, the most inconstant and therefore the most contemptible in the world, seemed to have recovered their senses when they had lost their freedom. The idol is beyond their reach, but the idolatry has vanished. A consul of so great a genius will make the nation formidable to all the earth but England ; but I hope there is no danger of any one imitating its example. As to the cause of liberty, this cursed nation has ruined it forever.” What he



thus said in his twenty-seventh year he was saying in his eighty-seventh, nearly in the same words ; the intervening sixty years having failed to amend or remove the impression thus received in his youth.

To his sister Elizabeth he described the second occasion when he saw Napoleon. It was at a review in the court of the Tuileries, when he stood within six or eight yards of him for a quarter of an hour. "His countenance," he wrote, "is not of that fierce cast which you see in the prints, and which perhaps it may assume in battle. He seems melancholy and reserved, but not morose or proud. His figure and complexion are nearly like those of Charles Norris. He rode a little white horse, about the size of my father's ; and cantered up and down six or eight lines of military, drawn out in the court of the Tuileries, which is about the size of Lincoln's Inn Fields. Each line lowered its colors as he passed, and he took off his hat in return. The French are not mightily civil, and one cannot much wonder, — but I got an admirable place by a piece of well-timed flattery. After I had seen Bonaparte canter by me at the distance of about a dozen yards, I left my situation at the window and went down close to the gate of the palace. Presently came the chief consul and half a score generals. The people made room through fear of the horses, which indeed were fierce enough, being covered with blue and red velvet, one half of which was hid with gold-lace. Instead of going with the crowd, I pushed forward and got by the side of Bonaparte's Mamelouk, in a place where there were none but soldiers. There was a very tall fellow just before me. I begged him to let me see Bonaparte, and observed that probably *he* had seen him often and shared his victories. The youth was delighted. *Ah ! le voilà, monsieur !* said he ; and in a moment there was nothing between me and this terror of Europe but the backs of two horses, over which I could see him as distinctly as I see this paper."

It is doubtful if he saw him again, though he always believed it was the fugitive from Waterloo whom he met at Tours thirteen years later, when the allied armies were in Paris ; but he remembered to the close of his life that first sight of Napoleon ; and his description only the year before his death, in conversation with an American lady in Florence, is not contradicted by his letter written more than sixty years before. "I was in Paris," said Landor one day, "at the time that Bonaparte made his entrance as first consul. I was standing within a few feet of him when he passed, and had a capital good look at him. He was exceedingly handsome then, with a rich olive complexion and oval face, youthful as a girl's. Near him rode Murat, mounted upon a gold-clad charger ; and very handsome he was too, but coxcombical."\*

\* *Atlantic Monthly* for April, 1866. "I looked with wonder upon a person," says the lady who describes these last days of Landor, "who remembered Napoleon Bonaparte as a slender young man, and listened with delight to a voice from so dim a past."

Of the pictures and works of art from Italy then assembled in Paris, which next to the hero of Italy interested him most, he also wrote to both brother and sister. During the whole of his stay he had passed in general three or four hours of every day in the Louvre, and had convinced himself that what was to be seen there could not be seen or studied properly in less than three years. Out of so immense a quantity of works (not less than a thousand, as he reckoned), scarcely a dozen had been injured in their transport to Paris, and not one beyond repair. Not that more than a fourth or fifth were to be counted fairly as the spoils of Italy ; for a great proportion had been brought together from the royal palaces, and from the private collections of the old nobility now wandering in exile. Terrible as the shock of the Revolution had been, he wondered to see around him so much that was unshaken. The religious houses only appeared to him to have suffered irretrievably. Versailles is his perpetual theme of wonder and delight. It struck him to be five times as large as Warwick Castle. The rooms were incrustated with marble, the gardens full of noblest works of statuary, everything magnificent beyond description. At poor Marie Antoinette's *petit trianon* he had passed two days, and fills half a letter to his sister with an account of its marvellous beauty and most affecting associations, then fresh with all their tragedy.

But he had also less dignified and agreeable subjects to write about, and among them were the hotels and lodgings of Paris. He found them three times as dear as in London. He paid four livres a night for a miserable bedroom, and for another poor brick-floor apartment had to pay a louis a week. But unless you had servants of your own, you could not dine at your lodgings ; and when he changed again for another hotel, it was the same. Though in that from which he wrote there were sixty bedrooms, there was not a fire in the house, and he was obliged to put on his shirt as damp as a newspaper from the press. Coach hire was another grievance, it having cost him on an average six or eight shillings a day ; and altogether he was not sorry to find his face turned again towards home.

On his way back he wrote to his sister of the carriage and cart-horses of the country, and a few lines from this letter are worth preserving.

"First I will tell you of those that are used in carriages. Their sides are so flat that a whole horse looks like half a one, and their harness is nothing but a hundred pieces of rope: such harness is easily repaired. On the contrary, the cart-horses are decorated most magnificently. There is a high piece of wood above the collar, on which is suspended a sheepskin, dyed red or blue. The rest of the body is covered with a net, the meshes of which are so large that it serves no purpose but ornament. There is not a horse in France that would not give all he is worth to be rid of these sheepskins, at least in summer ; but there is no redress. They groan most bitterly under the heavy imposition, and I have seen one or two of them perform a counter-revolution. Their names are generally *Jacob*,— at least I heard a fellow call two out of three by that name."



His feeling on finding himself in England\* again was upon the whole a healthier one than that with which he quitted it. The splendors of the Republic had paled. Too many close resemblances had presented themselves between the French cart-horse and the French citizen. The meshes woven by the conquests of Napoleon were no doubt highly ornamental, but otherwise not of much benefit; and the red sheepskin of military glory was not worth the galling pressure of its accompanying "high piece of wood above the collar." One of Landor's first acts at his return was to assist in the publication of a new edition of his *Gebir*, produced at Oxford under his brother's direction; and the line which had characterized Bonaparte as "a mortal man above all mortal praise," appeared with a note of very large qualification. "Bonaparte might have been so," he now said, "and in the beginning of his career it was augured that he would be. But unhappily he thinks that to produce great changes is to perform great actions. To annihilate ancient freedom and substitute new; to give republics a monarchical government, and the provinces of monarchy a republican one; in short, to overthrow by violence all the institutions, and to tear from the heart all the social habits of man, has been the tenor of his politics to the present hour." Nor did he hesitate in another note to declare, while confessing the hopes he had indulged of an empire of justice and equality, that in such hopes raised from the French Revolution every good man had been disappointed. "God forbid," he exclaimed, "that we should ever be impelled to use their means of amelioration, or that our arms should be attended by success like theirs, — internal and external subjugation."

### VIII. POETRY BY THE AUTHOR OF GEBIR.

Other literary work he also at this time took in hand. We have seen that in the lecture-rooms at Oxford he had made acquaintance with the story of the Phœceans, the invaders of Gaul who built Marseilles; and, struck with its political as well as poetical capabilities, he now took it for the subject of an epic. But he wanted patience for such a design, and in what little he managed to complete the politics had not strengthened the poetry. To uphold republics and liberty against "Circean soul-dissolving monarchy" was plain sailing enough: but commercial enterprise had then some prominent features that made not so easy the other part of his design, which was to exhibit the superiority of commerce over the greeds of war;

\* Here is the characteristic close of his last letter to his sister before leaving Paris. "How go on the Lambes? Is Mr. Lyttelton well? Has Lord Warwick run the country? Are the Greatheads at Guy's Cliff? How is Doctor Parr? I wrote to him by Miss Ferrers, but he has not answered my letter. I cannot guess the day of the month within a fortnight; so I pass it, and remain, &c." In the letter immediately preceding he had complained of his purse waxing feeble, telling her how impossible it was to live in Paris for a little. "They know an Englishman everywhere, and the extravagance of a few is a heavy tax on the rest."

and not even Bonaparte's offences against freedom were blacker in Landor's eyes than the traffic and traffickers in slaves.

Of the exact time when he took up or laid aside his plan, I cannot speak with certainty; but between the first notion and his execution of that part which he published there had come the interval and influence of *Gebir*. Unfortunately it was in some respects more adverse than favorable. With the consciousness of power it carried also the sense of failure, for as yet even the ten admirers he challenged had not come to him. There is a touching admission to this effect in one of his letters to Southey in 1809. "I confess to you, if even foolish men had read *Gebir*, I should have continued to write poetry. There is something of summer in the hum of insects."\* He had less care or spirit, after such experience, to renew the effort in any finished or elaborate form. He rushed at once into print with what he had written; sent it out uncorrected in another sixpenny pamphlet; and, pleading the example of the painter who asked people only to tell him his faults, protested that he wished to ascertain not merely whether his poetry was good but whether it was wanted.

The answer now may be given succinctly that it was good and was not wanted; falling dead-born, yet containing what the world should not have let perish so indifferently. I will quote a few passages to show this, the more willingly for having found that I had counselled Landor not to include the piece in his works when collected twenty years ago. Of this one of his letters reminds me. "At college," he writes to Mr. Browning, the year before his death and seventy years after the time he recalls, "I and Stackhouse were examined by the college tutor in *Justin*, who mentions the expulsion of the Phocæans from their country. In my childish ambition I fancied I could write an epic on it. Before the year's end I did what you see" (a copy of the old paper-backed sixpenny pamphlet, printed by Sharp, of Warwick, accompanied the letter), "and corrected it the year following. Forster very judiciously omitted it in my printed large volumes, but I am persuaded now that it is worth preserving as a curiosity of the kind."

A little also for a better reason. Undoubtedly to the poem as a whole, one of its own lines, speaking of a Sardinian vase of burnished gold,

"Dazzling without, but dark from depth within,"

is only too applicable; and though between a darkness of this kind and the mud that thickens shallow streams there is a difference, and obscurity will often be really occasioned by depth, a poem is the worst

\* In a later letter (December, 1810) he repeats: "The *popularis aura*, though we are ashamed or unable to analyze it, is requisite for the health and growth of genius. Had *Gebir* been a worse poem, but with more admirers, and I had once filled my sails, I should have made many, and perhaps some prosperous voyages. There is almost as much vanity in disdaining the opinion of the world as in pursuing it. In the one case we are conscious of possessing dignity; in the other we basely serpentize (*sic*) to obtain it. This is indeed a difference, and one worth knowing in the outset."



form one can find it in. On its surface, nevertheless, as in the Sardinian vase, there will be beauties telling with all the more dazzling prominence for that defect; and though without the wonderful charm of *Gebir*, there are in the little tract that contained the *Phœceans* things more masterly than in any other poetical writing of that day. In the prayer to the Gods to "strengthen with new stars the watery way"; in the invocation to the Powers "whose silent orbs control the balanced billows of the boundless sea"; and in the picture of the Destinies intent upon their loom, unoccupied "with aught beyond its moody murmuring sound"; single lines of unusual power and expressiveness occur, and I may instance especially those two in which a political creed held by the young poet to the last is tersely stated: "I deem it first of human miseries To be a tyrant; then, to suffer one." The same condensed meaning is in the preference avowed for a country struggling hard with tyranny over one where "Power o'er slaves was freedom and was 'rights,' And man degraded could but man degrade."

These will be admired:—

"But when the God  
Himself, resistless Neptune, struck one blow,  
Rent were the rocks asunder, and the sky  
Was darkened with their fragments ere they fell."

And here, worthy to be placed beside them, is the first fight of the island invaders:—

"We dash from every pinnace, and present  
A ridge of arms above a ridge of waves.  
Now push we forward; now the fight, like fire,  
Closes and gapes and gathers and extends.  
Swords clash, shields clang; spears whir athwart the sky,  
And distant helmets drop like falling stars."

Another picture may accompany this,—one of war's attendant horrors:—

"From wakened nest, and pinion silence-poised,  
The huge vulture drops rebounding: first he fears;  
Looks round; draws back; half lifts his cowering wing;  
Stretches his ruffled neck and rolling eye,  
Tastes the warm blood, and flickers for the foe."

Other lines will show the frequent reflective beauty that sets off this vivid picturesqueness of writing:—

"—Those who living filled the smallest space  
In death have often left the greatest void.  
When from his dazzling sphere the mighty falls,  
Men, proud of showing interest in his fate,  
Run to each other, and with oaths protest  
How wretched and how desolate they are.  
The good departs, and silent are the good."

Again: from the smaller pieces in the same tract:—

"In his own image the Creator made,  
His own pure sunbeam quickened thee, O man!  
Thou breathing dial! Since thy day began  
The present hour was ever markt with shade!"

Whatever else may be alleged of Landor's style, there is nothing weak or pompous about it; flaccid or turgid lines — the certain sign of inferior work — do not occur; and there are no gaspings for breath. His word answers always to his thought; and the movement of his verse, sustained at the level of his fancy and language, takes its music from both. Passages quite perfect in themselves stand out in this way from his compositions, even when otherwise least successful. It is indeed his defect too often to treat particular things with an excess of vividness, by which the general level of his work is placed at disadvantage. Impetuosity, want of patience, is as bad in literature as in life; and it was his very power of putting rapidly and visibly on his page what he saw himself with astonishing vividness, that, for want of certain links of connection, dropped in his eagerness as of no account but very necessary to the enjoyment of his readers, gave occasional obscurity to a style in itself transparently clear. This remark is made in connection with the poems under notice, because, in reviewing them, the stanch and as yet almost solitary friend of *Gebir* justified on this ground a little wavering from the allegiance he so generously and loyally had proffered to its writer, the young poet still even by name unknown to him.

Southey's article appeared in what was called the *Annual Review*,\* a "history of literature" just set up by Doctor Aikin, which happily for Southey had not a very long life; the wage for which he was laboring at it being so low that he must have struck work if it had not by starving its authors starved out itself. At this time it happened that William Taylor, of Norwich, had great influence over Southey, and had been doing his best to laugh him out of his idolatry of *Gebir*. Great at the derivation of words, he declared it to have been aptly so named, "quasi gibberish"; and Southey, though by no means abandoning his own opinion, was uneasy at the adverse opinion of his friend. Reviewing the new poem, he admits that the story of the former had been related in language so involved and difficult that few could penetrate its meaning; and that they who did might perhaps have overrated its merits in proportion to the difficulty they had overcome in discovering them. Still he protested its merits to be of most uncommon excellence; and that though the mine was dark and the ore deep, there *was* ore of priceless value. But he did not find the second effort equal to the first, or that the five intervening years had matured the taste of the author, whoever he might be. Somebody,† he added, had said of *Gebir* that its thoughts were connected by flea-skips of association; but *Gebir* was lucid compared with

\* Published by Longman and Rees, 1802: see Vol. I. p. 663.

† It was William Taylor's remark. I quote from a letter to Southey in which he speaks of *Gebir*. "There are exquisitely fine passages, but they succeed each other by such flea-skips of association that I am unable to track the path of the author's mind, and verily suspect him of insanity. But as he makes his appeal to a jury of geniuses, I am sure of being challenged, and my opinion can be of no consequence. It is not the verdict of the panel." From him too had come the allusion to Valerius Flaccus, also used by Southey at the close of his notice. See *ante*, p. 65.



the *Phocæans*. At the same time Southey defined the obscurity, not quite truly but not unfairly, as arising from a passion for compression; pointing out that this might be carried so far as to become a mere short-hand, reminding a writer of his own conceptions but never explaining them to others. In short, with much complimentary admission as to the few passages which he had found to be intelligible, Southey's verdict was adverse to *Poetry by the Author of Gebir*.

Fortunately Landor never knew this, or that his earliest critical friend had ever momentarily faltered in allegiance to him; but the remarks on *Gebir's* obscurity, supposed to have been Doctor Aikin's, were not without their influence. The author had lately taken lodgings at Oxford to be near his brother Robert, who was in residence at Worcester College; and the fruit of their deliberation was the publication, after not many months, of an edition of *Gebir* now rarely to be met with, accompanied not only by a Latin version of it, the *Gebirus*, but by prose arguments to each book in both languages, with notes of explanation to the passages supposed to be most obscure. I must add, however, that even this concession provoked no kindly return; that in his handsome coat *Gebir* fared no better than in his homely one; and that the brothers, impatient of the refusal of the critics to take further notice of their labors, went soon after into the critical line on their own account.

Mr. Robert Landor's letters have informed me pleasantly as to these matters. "Even the first edition of *Gebir* was followed speedily by little unbound publications of which I cannot remember correctly either the order or the titles. The *Phocæans*, the commencement of an epic poem, various Latin verses, and English verses, filling no more than a few pages, a little volume of Icelandic poems, suggested by Mr. Herbert's success, but nothing in prose that I can remember before the first two volumes of his *Imaginary Conversations*, except a few pages on Primitive Sacrifices. I often tried to dissuade him from such diminutive works, or rather scraps, as betraying too much impatience, and as excusing the public neglect. They were read by a few personal friends only, and only one of them was noticed in a Review. I am not unwilling that you should smile at my expense, knowing how tolerant you are. When there were no magazines excepting the *Gentleman's*, young aspirants to literature could try their pretensions nowhere else so safely as in the Reviews. The *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly*, a little later, were accessible only to a few of higher pretensions and qualities better ascertained. For the rest it was not at all necessary that they should have any knowledge of the subjects about which they wrote. They placed themselves as doctors learned in literary law. They took their seats on the judge's bench before they had prepared themselves by their studies for the bar. It was necessary to assume great dignity and authority; a compassionate or contemptuous treatment of the culprits trembling before them was necessary; but learning, wisdom, and experience were not necessary.

Excepting that my conscience acquits me of any wish to give pain, or of any malignant pleasure in tormenting my betters, such a critic was I! — a professional critic! — a reviewer! My first article was on Walter's Iceland tale of *Gunlaug and Helga*, — very confident in its patronage indeed! Walter was delighted; and both of us laughed at the imposture. The *Oxford Review* broke down after the first three or four numbers; and my conscience is the more easy as I had contributed only two or three articles, conceited enough but not malignant. Up to this time there had, I think, been no notice of my brother's publications since that by Southey of *Gebir*. But Walter's impatience under such unmerited neglect was betrayed by repeated and very contemptuous challenges offered both to critics and authors, in little publications which were never read by either. Then, as at a later age, he seemed equally enraged by the public neglect, and disdainful of its notice."

The best of those little "Icelandic" poems being accessible still in the printed works, nothing more need be said of it here, except that it appears to have been suggested to Landor by a letter from Birch, his favorite and friend at Rugby.

#### IX. WALTER BIRCH, AND SUCCESSION TO FAMILY ESTATES.

Several of Birch's letters had been kept by his school-fellow, and some of them bear date shortly before the latter, by Doctor Landor's death, became master of the Staffordshire estate: his mother continuing life-tenant of Ipsley Court and Tachbrooke. They are hardly of a kind to justify publication, but they show with what anxiety at that particular time this true friend was looking forward to the future which lay before the companion of his boyhood.

None of the figures of that distant past seems to recur with kinder association to Mr. Robert Landor's memory. Before the latter went up to Oxford, Birch had a fellowship at Magdalen, and he had become tired of Oxford life and quitted it for a tutorship before Mr. Robert Landor had obtained his own fellowship. But during the whole of his undergraduate career he had the advantage of companionship and counsel from this friend of his brother's, and in his letters he speaks of him with the utmost tenderness. "Walter often visited me," he says, "when travelling between Warwick, London, Bristol, or South Wales; and he eagerly renewed his intercourse with Birch, whom I had not seen till then. Here was an instance of friendship which is so often formed between men as unlike each other as possible in every other particular excepting a single pursuit. Birch was gentle, quiet, unassuming, very tolerant of other men's opinions though sufficiently consistent in the maintenance of his own, an earnest Christian, a sincere churchman, and — O Mr. Forster! — rather too much inclining to Toryism. Walter was a black Jacobin. I very soon acquired the title, in my own college, of *Citizen Landor*, — and even



the Citizen, as being the only republican there. But Birch loved Walter and smiled at me. Walter used to speak of his friend's maiden modesty, which extended beyond his morals.\* Perhaps this wide difference between them kept both parties silent on graver subjects: both feeling unwilling to quarrel, and knowing how irreconcilable were their opinions. Yet Birch often checked Walter's extravagant language by his laughter; and once he asked me how it could have happened that my brother should have met accidentally so many ladies, in an evening's walk or two with him and me, every one of whom was incomparably the most beautiful creature whom he had ever seen? how each of twenty fools could be by much the greatest fool upon earth? and, above all, how Mr. Pitt could be the greatest rascal living, if Mr. Canning surpassed Mr. Pitt, and Lord Castlereagh surpassed Mr. Canning, and all three were infinitely exceeded as brutes and fools by their gracious sovereign King George the Third?" One may discover in Birch's few remaining letters not a little of this humorous sense of his friend's ludicrous excesses of speech, at once suggested and in its expression subdued by personal regard of an uncommon kind, and in no way abating an almost passionate admiration given eagerly to Landor's genius and scholarship.

The earliest in date is one of April, 1805, which, after telling him of a publication by Mr. William Herbert of translations of Icelandic sonnets and of some original pieces that he thinks would interest him by the accurate information contained in the notes and by the spirit of the poetry, proceeds to say in the next sentence: "Our friend Cary of Christ Church published about a month ago a translation of the *Inferno* of Dante, which I am just about to read. I anticipate considerable pleasure from it. I hear already that it sells well."† Exactly fifty-seven years had passed after this when Landor, writing to Mr. Lytton ‡ of Birch himself and of their school-fellow the translator of Dante, adds in the very next sentence: "We have another admirable translator in William Herbert. I owe my *Gunlaug* to his stories from the Icelandic. How incomparably better this northern poetry than that of the Troubadours! The Icelandic seems to be a softer language than theirs, which is highly praised by people who surely never read it; for it is excessively harsh, and much resembles the Genoese. The Gauls could never scale the heights of Parnassus

\* "At school," Landor writes in one of his letters to me, "Birch was named *Sanctus* from the sobriety of his manners, — how different from mine!"

† In the memoir of Cary by his son (1847) will be found letters from Birch confirmation of the character here given, and showing with what unbounded affection Cary regarded him. On the birth of that son (1797) he addressed a sonnet to Birch, which closes thus: —

"For if some fairy bade me take the boon  
That most I covet for my darling child,  
Though all my wandering wishes I might send  
In search of every bliss beneath the moon,  
Yet should I most desire thy wisdom mild,  
Thy pure and open heart, my honored friend." I. 96.

‡ See *ante*, p. 14.

since Apollo drove them down with thunder and lightning." A word dropped by accident, unconsciously awakening some association of the past, had again connected the names in the old man's memory.

Very frequently Birch alludes to the *Gebirus*. His friend continuing to press him for any remarks it might have suggested in the reading to so fine a Latin scholar, Birch retorts that he is only a scholar as his old school-fellow is a master ; that his objection to criticism in such a case is the presumption of it ; and that he has but to think of past days at Rugby and Oxford to know the little reason he should have, by comparison with his friend, "for confidence in his critical sagacity and still more in his grammatical accuracy." In vain does his friend encourage him to greater confidence by sending him a list of faults he has himself already discovered : Birch thinks unobjectionable several of the passages named, and says (what is quite true of the *Gebirus*) that not one of them to which objection might be taken on strictly classical grounds is without beauty of another kind more than compensating. In fine, says Birch : "I have come to the conclusion, after repeated reading of the *Gebirus*, that my knowledge of poetical latinity is much more confined than yours, and that a more extensive and habitual study of the Latin poets has made you even more accurate than I can pretend to be."

Another subject of discussion in their letters is pastoral poetry, as to which some of Landor's opinions, though far from exhaustive in the matter, are expressed with vigor and liveliness. His point is that in pastoral poetry, though apparently the easiest of any, none since the ancients had succeeded ; and though he does scant justice to Thomson, a man not more lovable for his character than for his writings, what he says has truth at the bottom of it, and he was always proud of what he thought he had himself accomplished in this field by the episode of Tamar.

"The Germans strain themselves into agony. Their shepherds toss about, and toil and sweat like drovers. Yet their woods are more romantic than woods in theatric scenery, and their fields more gaudily flowered than Wilton carpets. You are tired, and you would turn ; but turn wherever you will, you are caught either in tears or in flames. In our own country (I omit the puerilities of Pope and Phillips) there is Thomson. His characters have all a ridiculous mixture of the modern and the antique. There is the flaunting dress and high-colored bloom that the spruce apprentice on a Sunday evening admires in a Birmingham housemaid. Whenever he rises, he rises by violent efforts, — which show less of fervid and vigorous imagination than of impatient languor and sickly restlessness. He was however a most amiable man, and there are many great beauties in his works ; though he never was at all successful in the delineation of character. His verses make one pant in reading them ; which is owing to their structure, not to what they convey. He was too happy to know anything of the passions. In fine, we have nothing in common with pastoral life ; while even the highest of the ancients had much. Our modes of address are different ; our habits, our inclinations. They had a nerve more than we have. Ours is polish ; theirs, poetry. We succeed in proportion as we remove ourselves from home, particularly in pastoral."



Of the kind of life Landor was leading at this time, while his father's health had been declining, the letters give various indications. He was far exceeding the income put aside for him. Already indeed Doctor Landor has had to sell some property in discharge of debts contracted by him; and in return he had undertaken to present his brother Charles to the family living of Colton, in the event of its not falling vacant before his father's death. Though supposed to be mainly resident in Bath or Bristol, or in Wales, he was very frequently in London. Birch goes at his particular request to see a horse he has set his mind upon; \* congratulates him on the acquisition of a Titian; and is able, by lucky purchase of his own at a broker's near Cavendish Square, to add to his friend's collection a "grand old head." † In one of his letters Birch expatiates on the pleasure he has had in Landor's description of the lofty aims he is cherishing, and in the next but one sends him urgent remonstrance against his unnecessarily brooding over calamities. You discover from one of the letters that these calamities are connected with money; and from another that a princely gift is nevertheless ready for "the collection made lately in Christ Church to the amount of sixty pounds" in aid of the author of the *Pleasures of Hope*. There are questions in politics where it is plain enough that the friends are in imperfect sympathy; but even Birch could hardly have refused a smile to one of his friend's epigrams upon the common talk then spreading itself abroad as to the Prince of Wales and his doings.

"First Carlton House, my country friend,  
And then the playhouse you should see;  
Here comedies in marriage end,  
There marriages in tragedy." ‡

One political subject there was, however, on which Landor found himself now in agreement with his Tory friend, as with most Englishmen who cared much for England. In truth a powerful independent

\* "The horse is not very handsome, but can go seventy miles in a day: only five years old: I have told Charles to write and buy it. What livery-stables shall it be sent to, if we can get it for you?"

† "I do not fully assure myself you will like it, being aware that in matters of this sort (nor do I mean to limit the assertion there) your taste is much more penetrating and exact than my own. . . . You would deserve an opprobrious title," he adds, replying to a remark of Landor's, "if you dared become a renegade from the Muse after having enjoyed so large a portion of her favor." In the same letter he speaks very affectionately of Mr. Robert Landor, and with great respect of the opinion of their brother Henry.

‡ From a satirical poem of earlier date, suppressed at the entreaty of Birch, I take a couple of stanzas for the sake of some personal allusions in them. It purported to be an address to the fellows of his old college in Oxford upon their preparations against Bonaparte's threatened invasion:—

"Still, bred in your college, though no longer in it, I  
Send ye health and fraternity, fellows of Trinity!  
Through haste to salute you, the feet of my doggerel  
Like a drunken or down-hill and devil-drove hog reel.  
Take me for your leader: you have not forgot  
That your most humble servant was once a good shot:  
Though ye dreaded, but dreaded without rhyme or reason,  
He haply might turn his fine talents to treason."

party having its root in the higher middle class, indifferent for the most part to the home quarrels of the leading statesmen, and caring as little for the combinations of Addington and Pitt, or Fox and the Grenvilles, as for the foolish exclusiveness of the king, had been lately reanimating and strengthening the armed resistance to France. The previous year, which brought Pitt back into office, had made the first consul emperor and launched against England the fleets of France and Spain. But Nelson was again afloat, and the hope of all that was best in England turned upon him. In verses that have not survived, Landor had given expression to this confidence in the hero; and almost simultaneously with the news of Trafalgar the poem reached his friend, whose acknowledgment of it in a letter dated the 11th November, 1805, is all that now remains to indicate what it was.

"I thank you for your letter and animated verses, where you seem to have been inspired by the prophetic spirit ascribed to poets of old, and to have anticipated the glorious victory of Nelson, the news of which had reached me just before I received them. I hope and trust the emotions which that unparalleled achievement must have excited in your mind, signalized as it was yet more by the fall of the hero, by the magnificent close of the most brilliant naval career in all history, will not be suffered to subside till they have assumed a shape and a form (as I well know they may!) which it would be injustice to yourself and the public to withhold from their applause. The news of another considerable victory has arrived this very morning. What a blow to the projects of that insatiable ambition, that restless and enterprising spirit, which, avowedly grasping at maritime as well as continental pre-eminence, was enlarging its views to universal empire! Already, in the sanguine anticipation of Frenchmen, was Bonaparte become another Jove, and the affairs of our little planet dependent on his nod! Has not this now passed forever? The meridian is reached, and will he not hasten to his setting? God grant it!"

He closes the same letter by telling Landor that their friend Cary has finished, and is about to send out, in small octavo, the second volume of his translation of Dante, which, he adds, "considering its very close adherence to the original, seems to me more elegant than I could easily have conceived." In the same letter he notices also the publication of Scott's *Lay* and Southey's *Madoc*; saying he has read both, and that though he believes it does not agree with the general sentiment he will yet venture to say that he far prefers Southey. But he thinks Southey's fault is diffusion, just as the friend to whom he is writing has the grander defect of compression, the excess in the other extreme, — an excellent remark, in which lay much of the secret, never perfectly known to himself, of Southey's singular passion for Landor's poetry. It was an ideal he was always aiming at, and missing; and in proportion as he found himself still falling short of it, his admiration increased.

During the period of these letters this amiable and accomplished person was living as tutor in the family of an English earl. "He seems," writes Mr. Robert Landor, "to have grown tired of a college



life since the departure of so many friends from Oxford; and he undertook the tuition of a youth in one of our most wealthy and noble houses. Walter learnt some particulars of his residence there, certainly not from himself.\* Birch resigned his office before the education of his pupil had been completed, greatly to their regret. Some attachment had arisen between himself and a daughter of this family, — whether it was mutual, or on which side it was strongest, is not known. But Birch was much too honorable and conscientious for its encouragement, and therefore retired on a small college living. I cannot understand how any disengaged lady could live in daily intercourse with such a man — for he was very handsome too — and remain insensible to such amiability. Walter even believed that his friend's own heart was concerned, and had heard additions to the story which I fancy were quite apocryphal. I suspect that Walter may here have confounded the history of Birch's friend Russell, who left us only two sonnets, dying of a broken heart, with some such narrative, heard imperfectly and easily believed, of his own friend." In the only allusions to the family I find in Birch's letters, unusually strong regard appears, and very marked expressions of respect; nor does it seem otherwise probable that any romantic ending to the little love-story was contributed by himself, for he married and had children, surviving it a score of years; but the mention of it can now give pain to no one, and what may be accepted for truth in it is characteristic and worthy of Landor's favorite school-fellow.

"I sincerely sympathize with you," he wrote to Landor on the Christmas day of 1805, "in your regret for the loss of your father, though his previous state certainly rendered it desirable to himself, and on that account should make it less afflicting to his family."†

\* Of about this date I find the subjoined hendecasyllabics, true in every point to the character of his friend, as expressed in the preceding pages:—

"Promisi mihi, BIRCHE, non tacere  
 Ut florens studiis bonis juventa  
 Utque sancta virilis esset ætas  
 Præ cunctis tibi; sed parum Camenas  
 Felices habeo, inchoans honores  
 Quos tantis meritis parare vellem:  
 Nam dolore medullitus peresus  
 Sum doloribus optimi sodalis.  
 Possum hoc dicere, verum, at indisertum  
 Clarus ingenio, lepore, cultu,  
 Doctus, nec nisi in optimis librorum,  
 Es quicquid cuperet quis esse natum,  
 Desperans sibi, differensve tantum  
 Et paulisper in otium remittens  
 Ut nil proposito accidat molestum.  
 Es talis quia vir puerque, BIRCHE,  
 Nullo tempore crastinus fuisti."

† Doctor Landor died at the close of 1805, but had been ailing all that year. I quote a letter of Landor's to his brother Henry dated in February, which mentions his father's anxiety at the time to complete the settlement of his property. But I quote it also for its closing allusions to Parr, his old schoolmaster James, and his own Latin verses, in which the evident and eager interest contrasts amusingly with the careless tone of request about the property, which his brother is to explain when he has leisure. "My

At the close of the letter there is a mention of their Rugby days in connection with a youth who had there been fag to Landor, and to both of them since not a little troublesome. With a wise thoughtfulness Birch warns his friend against the dangers, in the new position that awaits him, of indiscriminating kindness.

The remark warns me that here closes the period of Landor's life over which any kind of external restraint or control was possible; and that now opens "that part of his history," I am quoting his brother's language to me, "which followed our father's death and the sale of his Staffordshire property, and which appears like an exaggeration of the improbabilities of a dream." But before finally quitting the period which these two opening books include, I will let him speak another word for himself upon his Rugby days. Its proper place was earlier in the narrative; but before I found the letter to me containing it, that portion of my book was printed off; and, as it confirms and explains what formerly was said\* of the cause of his departure from Rugby, gives his little fag a pleasanter word than Birch could afford him in the letter last quoted, and supplies another

father tells me that 'he supposes you have informed me of his having conveyed to me the house my uncle lives in, and the two next, Godwin's and John Holt's.' I do not comprehend this, nor see the necessity of any such conveyance. Explain it when you have leisure. My poor father seems to take it for granted that my uncle will die before him; for he says, 'When my brother dies, I would recommend to you to sell them, and think that they would be a most desirable purchase to the proprietors of the Forge,' &c. I have often thought so too; but I am inclined also to think that these people would give as much for about one half of the garden with the paddock, as another person would for the whole of the premises. I am surprised that Sir George Baker, who writes remarkably good and graceful Latin, should not have been able to make Inglis's stuff show better than it does. But the Latin for inscriptions is widely different from that which is read at schools, and perhaps Sir George B. may not be versed in it. No man upon earth knows it so well as our friend at Hatton. It was a great disappointment to me that you were unable to decipher my verses. I took uncommon pains in transcribing them, and the verses are above mediocrity. One night I happened to think on poor James, and composed before I went to sleep the following Iambics. I have often retouched them since. Send them to the Doctor [Parr]. I mean my copy, as I have taken uncommon pains with the words and punctuation," &c. A portion of the verses, on his personal relations with his old master, will perhaps, after what has been said of those Rugby days, have an interest for the reader:—

"Vale, O magister! O Jamese, ave et vale!  
Tu dum vocabas sæpius flevi puer,  
Versans, minatum ubi maxime est periculum,  
Inefficaces, algidus metu, manus;  
Nunc, dum voco ipse nec refert contra, fleo.  
At hostis olim tu mihi tibi que ego . . .  
Qui meque teque jam videntes crederent?  
Ah cur reductis abnuebas naribus,  
Spectans refrigeransque lævo lumine,  
Cui primum amicus ingenuusque omnis puer  
Et cui secundum ipse æmulus daret locum?  
Sed hanc habebis, hanc habebo, gratiam,  
Quum carmine istorum excidas, vives meo.  
Nam nec severus semper aut supercili  
Tristis, nec inficetus aut expers salis,  
Sed comis indulgensque vel nostro joco  
Eras, solutis jam scholæ compagibus."

\* See *ante*, p. 18.



varied and vivid pattern of the mingled yarn of which the web of every part of his own life was made, it will not now be out of place. At the date of the letter we had been corresponding about an Eton boy's cruelty to his fag, which the newspapers had got hold of and were sharply reproving.

"When I wrote about the cruelty of the Eton boy I had not forgotten a lighter case at Rugby. With what pleasure and even pride do I recall to memory that I was the first of that school who paid the lad he fagged. Poor little B. H. had three or four bottles to fill at the pump in a hard frost, and was crying bitterly, when I took pity on him and made him my fag, at threepence a week, I think. This exempted him from obedience to others, and I seldom exercised my *vested rights*. Perhaps the head master, James, thought it an innovation to pay. He certainly hated me for my squibs, and had also threatened to expel me for never calling Will Hill *Mister*; I having told him I never would call Hill or any other *Mister* unless I might call the rest so. At last he wrote to my father that I was rebellious and incited others to rebellion; and unless he took me away he should be obliged ('much to his sorrow') to expel me. As I was within five of the head, and too young for Oxford, I was placed under a private tutor and matriculated at seventeen. Among my enormities was writing the verses I now send you. James had chosen some of my worst verses *to play for*, as we called it: that is, every half-holiday was supposed to be gained for the lads by the best verses of the day. Mine were always the best, but, out of malice I am afraid, the very worst of them were chosen; and this was my revenge."

Of the extent of it, far exceeding the precisely similar instance referred to in a former page,\* the reader must happily be left ignorant, the accompanying Alcaic verses not admitting of translation. But what they show of a man's intellect in youth entirely without guidance or control, the letter recalling them not less strikingly shows of the passions and impulses of youth surviving to extreme old age; and it will be well to take this double consideration with us into the years we have now to retrace.

\* *Ante*, p. 18.

## BOOK THIRD.

1805-1814. *ÆT.* 30-39.

### AT BATH AND CLIFTON, IN SPAIN, AND AT LLANTHONY.

I. Life at Bath. — II. Robert Southey. — III. First Letters to Southey. — IV. In Spain. — V. Letters to Southey on Spain and Spaniards. — VI. Letters on Kehama and Roderick. — VII. The Tragedy of Count Julian. — VIII. In Possession of the Abbey. — IX. Marriage and Life at Llanthony. — X. Public Affairs. — XI. Private Disputes. — XII. Departure from England.

#### I. LIFE AT BATH.

IN the interval that immediately followed his succession to the paternal estate, Landor lived chiefly in Clifton or at Bath; and at the latter place his younger brother found him, soon after their father's death, "with the reputation of very great wealth, and the certainty, at his mother's death, of still greater. A fine carriage, three horses, two men-servants, books, plate, china, pictures, in everything a profuse and wasteful outlay, all confirmed the grandeur." Upon the whole not a life, for such a man, either profitable then to have lived or now to recall; and very little here shall be said of it. Some love-verses connected with the later portion of it can also afford to perish. Their heroine, Ioné, who translated far too easily into Jones, has retained not so much as a fragment of romance. Even of his *Ianthe*, to whom in these days much beautiful and tender verse was dedicated, there is little now remaining to claim a place in my story except such chance allusion as hereafter may drop from himself.

The sort of life thus led in Bath, however, could not be passed without results more or less grave; and in little more than a year they showed themselves in a form for which the remedy was supposed to have been found in a project for selling the old paternal estate in Staffordshire, and reinvesting in other land at greater profit. Reserving these things to a year or two hence, when the necessary arrangements, meanwhile set on foot, became practicable and were completed, I shall dwell upon those incidents only of the intervening years out of which matter can be extracted that is worth remembering, or that throws any kind of light upon the variable career and character of which, with all its good and evil so capriciously intermixed, its comedy and tragedy, its clouds and sunshine, its generous emotions and tempestuous passions, its use and its waste of prodigious powers, it is my object in these pages to convey at the least no false impression.



Remembering allusions formerly made\* to the wife of a friend very dear to him in early Warwick days, it will be proper not to omit the mention of her death, which occurred at this time. It should be given for such evidence as it affords that, amid his present daily and rightly round of "routs, plays, concerts, and balls," his heart was yet easily moved as ever, and keen in its susceptibility of suffering. The young wife of the physician who had succeeded to his father's practice in Warwick, the "angel" of his early letters, died so suddenly that he had not even heard of her illness, and now first read of it in a newspaper. Her infant daughter and herself had died together. "Poor Lambe, poor Lambe," he writes to Parr, at whose house the friends had so often met :—

"Poor little Elizabeth and her mother, now indeed divine! Yes, death has proved the fact, and not the contrary. For what is death? A change of situation, an enlargement of liberty, a privilege, a blessing, an apotheosis. What hours have we passed together, hours never to return, or to produce their likeness in this world! In vain have I tried every species of amusement: routs, plays, concerts, and balls. Her image rises up everywhere before me. I sicken at the sight of beauty. Did she not treat me as a brother? did she ever call me by more than one name? The sound of Walter was the sweetest of sounds. Pardon me, I will acknowledge it, she made me think myself a virtuous and great man. Certainly I never left her company but I was more happy and more deserving of happiness."

The same unmistakable sorrow is expressed to his sister Elizabeth, one of his letters to her ending thus :—

"It was a shock from which I have not yet recovered, and which I shall feel, I believe, forever.

"O Lambe, my early guide, my guardian friend,  
Do thus our pleasures, thus our prospects end!  
All that could swell thy heart, thy soul elate,  
Heaven gave, but pondering found one gift too great.  
What now avails thee, what availed thee then,  
To shine in science o'er the sons of men;  
Each varying plant, each tortuous root to know,  
What latent pests from lucid waters flow;  
All the deep bosom of the Air contains,  
Fire's parent strength and Earth's o'erflowing veins?  
The last unwelcome lesson teaches this,  
Frail are alike our knowledge and our bliss.  
Against the storms of fate and throbs of pain  
Wisdom is impotent and virtue vain." †

His eldest sister was his constant correspondent at this time, and would have saved him from many a folly if cleverness and good sense could have done it. But he was no sooner out of one scrape than he was into another. "The battledore you talk of," he replies from Bath to one of her letters, "is called a cornet, and I play at it better than any man in England. I was taught in France. A little girl said to me, *Jouez donc aux cornets, monsieur?* My reply was, *A la bonne*

\* *Ante*, pp. 88, 90, &c.

† A portion of these verses (without the last two) will be found with variations in his published poems.

*heure, ma petite. Je ne me suis pas marié à présent.* I played, nevertheless, and have played the same game since. I believe I am more in request here than I have ever been ; not for myself,— for we are not, like wine, improvable by age,— but for Frolic and Favorite, and what is whispered of Llanthony.” Frolic and Favorite were his carriage-horses. He ends his letter with a parable of a young lady whom a spectre was reported to have visited at night, until her mother, by taking her to sleep in her own room, exorcised the ghost, to which he had himself thereupon addressed these lines :—

“ Thou, since she sleeps with her mamma,  
Lookst like a fox in some ha-ha,  
Who views, with nostrils opened wide,  
A pheasant on the other side,  
Pants, grumbles, whines with lank desires,  
And licks his whiskers, and retires ! ”

Very well for the ghost that he could ; but some enterprises there were out of which retirement was less easy, and they largely occupy his sister Elizabeth’s letters. She is in a perpetual agitation of warning against any ill-advised marriage, one danger of this kind succeeding another very rapidly. She has indeed no objection to a well-considered proceeding of the sort ; and sketches one in the language of an old servant who has come with her annual gift of a basket of chickens to the family at Warwick, and has declared herself “ *anackauntable* glad Mr. Walter is growing jolly, and hopes he will marry some fine lady of a good family and fortin, as he ought, to be sure.” Not that to the sister these appear indispensable, if their place is otherwise filled. “ Birth and fortune,” she tells her brother, “ are not requisites, but good disposition and good understanding are ; and how many innocents, only for being pretty, have you all your life been thinking sensible ! ” That was a home-thrust, and had some effect, the lady against whom in particular it was aimed not retaining her influence ; but one of these affairs had gone very far before anything of it was known to her, and she has almost to resign herself to the confession that it must be. “ I hope to God your choice may be a fortunate one, for I never was and never shall be happy when you are otherwise. You are not just to me. I *do* wish you to be married ; but I am sure the common sort are not calculated for you.”

Happily escape came again ; and in this case from the lady herself. Some offence had been taken by her, not clearly to be made out from Landor’s letter, which dwells far less on the incident itself than upon the ball and supper where it happened, with its winter pines, peas, strawberries, and “ sparagus,” besides ice enough to cover the Nieper and beauty enough to thaw it all. To which his sister quietly rejoins that she hears with delight of his being again heart-free ; makes neat allusion to the lady’s predecessor as well as herself, by remarking that their friend “ the old doctor ” had declared “ neither to be worthy of him ” ; hopes he may now have time, as her mother says, to “ think of somebody worth something ” ; and tells him that the



blaze of beauty over in Bath must be brighter than the fire by which she is writing if it succeeds in again making him intemperately warm.

But the heats that Landor suffered from were not from that blaze only. His eager interest in politics had not meanwhile slackened ; and unpalatable as many of his opinions were to the particular part of society which his present mode of living necessarily threw much in his way, moderation or compromise on any points, even in the matter of speech, was a virtue still unknown to him. "About sixty years ago," his brother writes to me, "an old friend of his who felt much esteem for him, a Major Tickell, the descendant of Addison's friend, expressed his surprise to me that my brother should have lived so long. 'We were occasional guests,' said he, 'at the same public table in Bath two winters, where there were other military men ; and if I had talked as he talked, there would have been half a dozen bullets through my body if the first five had been insufficient.' Such dangers were in truth only escaped as his character became known for extravagance, and sometimes chiefly through the interposition of such friends as the major." On the other hand, it is to be remembered that there were estimable men in the major's profession then, to whom the mere praise of Mr. Fox would be a horrible Jacobin extravagance ; and the accession of that statesman and his friends to power on Pitt's death in the early part of the year had given unusual bitterness to party strifes and hatreds. Landor's intercourse with Parr it naturally drew closer ; and it brought him again into correspondence with Adair, from one of whose letters we may gather something of the turn Landor's outlook in politics was taking at the time. More eager than ever against Bonaparte, and resolute for maintaining the efficiency of the power which had been thus far the only check to his ambition, he had written to Adair about the navy. The reply, very cordial in its tone, gives us a glimpse of the troubles of "All the Talents" from a source very near the fountain-head : —

"I concur entirely with you in opinion respecting the times, and the nature of the difficulties with which the new administration has to contend : I think also with you that 'whatever can be done by wisdom and humanity' will be done by Mr. Fox : but I confess that my hopes are not so great as my fears in any view I can take of the situation of our affairs. Indeed it is my firm belief that although, for reasons which appear conclusive to them, they think it more prudent to abstain from laying open to the country the true state of those affairs, they have found them in a much worse condition than they could have themselves believed at any time during their opposition. I have heard many plans suggested at various times for the manning of our navy, and for keeping up a sufficient number of seamen during peace to enable government to equip their fleets on a sudden without having recourse to pressing or similar methods ; but for some reason or other, naval men have always rejected even the experiment. The present Board of Admiralty would, I should think, give a fair hearing at least to any new hints that might be offered them on so impor-

tant a subject. Indeed I think that if you would give yourself the trouble to put your ideas into a practicable form, much real good might result from submitting them to the consideration of Lord Howick."

This letter was written at the close of April, 1806, and led of course to nothing. Before a year was over Fox had followed to the grave his great adversary; the rest of "the talents" were nowhere; and with the Portland and Perceval combinations the career of Castle-reagh and Canning had begun.

It was while these changes were in progress that an incident occurred which Landor would often himself tell pleasantly in his latter years. On some occasion unexpectedly he had gone, after a long interval, to visit his mother at Warwick; when, Parr happening to have a large company at dinner that day, one of the guests told their entertainer of the sudden and unlooked-for arrival at Mrs. Landor's. "Eat your dinner, eat your dinner," said Parr; but hardly had the table-cloth been removed, and the first glass of wine taken, when the old doctor laid down his pipe. "Drink your wine, my friends, drink your wine; I must go and see Walter Landor." And so he did. At Warwick he presented himself, as unexpectedly as Landor had done very shortly before, and the friends had an hour together; but nothing would he take, not even the cup of tea that was pressed upon him. "No, no, Walter, I must go back to my friends; they are all at dinner." And Landor would finish the story in a pleasant elated way by declaring himself to be the only man in the world that could have made Doctor Parr ride half a dozen miles with his dinner in his mouth and his pipe out of it.

## II. ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Soon after the incident last related, Landor had started on a tour in the lake-country, which Parr thus announced to a friend who complained afterwards that the promised visit was never paid him. "In the course of the summer you will be called upon by Mr. Walter Landor, who is going on a tour to the lakes. He is my particular friend. He is impetuous, open-hearted, magnanimous; largely furnished with general knowledge; well versed in the best classical writers; a man of original genius, as appears in his compositions both in prose and verse; a keen hater of oppression and corruption; and a steady friend to civil and religious liberty. I am confident you will be much interested by his conversation; and it is my good fortune to know that his talents, attainments, and virtues amply compensate for all his singularities." No bad picture by a friendly hand.

With the lakes already were connected the chiefs of the little band of writers whose fame became afterwards identified with that beautiful country. Coleridge had been living at Greta; Wordsworth at Grasmere, not many miles away; and Southey was now permanently



fixed at Keswick, the richer for the Fox and Grenville ministry by a pension of two hundred a year which one of its members, his friend Wynne, had obtained for him. Yet far less for this did the name of the Whig chief continue for some years longer a grateful sound to Southey, than for an incident of one of the last social readings at St. Anne's Hill; when Fox and his company, not closing at eleven as usual, "went on till after midnight reading *Madoc*."\* This was something for a man to remember to whom poetry was all in all, and to whom the half of seventy-nine shillings and a penny had just presented itself as his share of *Madoc's* profits after twelve months' sale. But Landor admired *Madoc* too; its writer's name had become known to him as that of the first and almost only friend of *Gebir*; and in a letter to his sister in the summer of 1807 he deplores his ill fortune in having missed an introduction to Southey. He had very nearly bought an estate in his neighborhood, adjoining Loweswater Lake; but he had not seen him.

Once afterwards they missed again. At the house of a friendly physician and his wife at Clifton, from whom many kindnesses had been received by Landor's sisters during an illness consequent on their watching at the sick-bed of their father, Southey had in former years been a frequent visitor; and in a letter at the close of 1807, Mrs. Carrick writes to tell Landor that Mr. Southey, who had not been with them for some years, had called with his friend Mr. Danvers, very anxious to get an introduction to the author of *Gebir*. "He says he will be particularly gratified to wait on you if you will allow him. I will not repeat Mr. Southey's opinion of *Gebir*; yet one may be permitted to be gratified by the opinion of such a man. He is just now going to publish his *History of the Cid*. Did I wrong when I said you would be pleased to see Mr. Southey? Perhaps I said 'delighted.' He has visited and admired your Llanthony Abbey with the enthusiasm of a poet. I will endeavor to let you know the precise time we may expect again to see him, and I hope you will not have taken your flight to Bath." Not yet, however, was the meeting with Southey to take place, nor was Landor yet absolutely lord of Llanthony: but all his friends knew he had set his heart on the place, for that on hearing of it after the failure at Loweswater, without seeing it he had made an offer for it, and with a thumping oath protested he would have it: with what truth as well as vehemence will shortly be seen. Nevertheless he and Southey were to meet first, after all.

At Danvers's lodgings in Bristol this memorable friendship began. "At Bristol," wrote Southey to Grosvenor Bedford at the end of

\* The generous and genial statesman was indeed a favorite with all the poets; and but a very few years before, Wordsworth, sending him the *Lyrical Ballads*, had thus written: "In common with the whole of the English people, I have observed in your public character a constant predominance of sensibility of heart. . . . This cannot but have made you dear to poets; and I am sure that if, since your first entrance into public life, there has been a single true poet living in England, he must have loved you." (See *Memoirs* by his nephew, I. 167.)

April, 1808, "I met the man of all others whom I was most desirous of meeting, — the only man living of whose praise I was ambitious, or whose censure would have troubled me. You will be curious to know who this could be. Savage Landor, the author of *Gebir*; a poem which, unless you have heard me speak of it, you have probably never heard of at all. I never saw any one more unlike myself in every prominent part of human character, nor any one who so cordially and instinctively agreed with me on so many of the most important subjects. I have often said before we met that I would walk forty miles to see him; and, having seen him, I would gladly walk fourscore to see him again. He talked of *Thalaba*, and I told him of the series of mythological poems which I had planned; mentioned some of the leading incidents on which they were to have been formed, and also told him for what reason they were laid aside; — in plain English, that I could not afford to write them. Landor's reply was, *Go on with them, and I will pay for printing them, as many as you will write, and as many copies as you please.* I had reconciled myself to my abdication (if the phrase may be allowable), and am not sure that this princely offer, has not done me mischief; for it has awakened in me old dreams and hopes which had been laid aside, and a stinging desire to go on, for the sake of showing him poem after poem, and saying, *I need not accept your offer, but I have done this because you made it.* It is something to be praised by one's peers; ordinary praise I value as little as ordinary abuse."

Prepared long for this meeting at last, as well in likeness as in unlikeness suited for friendly intercourse, finding at once a common ground in which what was weakest in each took strength from what was best in the other, the friendship so begun that day was ended only by death. Soon there fell from it all that might have taken the taint of patronage in Landor, and all that mere literary vanity might have suggested to Southey; while yet enough was left of the spirit of the compact made at their first meeting, not to weaken in either the confidence inspired by it.

Regularly at successive intervals for five years from that day Southey sent by post to Landor, transcribed clearly in his wonderful autograph, each section of the whole of his poems of the *Curse of Kehama* and *Roderick* (the latter under the name of "Pelayo"), exactly as each had been first composed; and duly by the same channel payment as regular had been sent back by his friend, in admiration always, often in shrewd suggestion, never without zealous and loud encouragement. Payment of other kind, though frequently pressed, had been steadily declined; but Landor ultimately forced upon Southey, through his publishers, a check for a large number of copies of *Kehama*, which had been dedicated to himself. To this statement it will be right to add that every transcript by Southey, with its covering letter, was kept by Landor; and that all of them, with the rest of the correspondence stretching uninterruptedly over



thirty years, were given by Landor to myself in view of some such undertaking as the present. Southey's were afterwards lent to his son and his son-in-law for the selection of such portions as they might desire to publish ; but Landor's, which he had himself reclaimed from the executors of his friend, were at his own request wholly reserved for the use now about to be made of them. And with them, let it be clearly said once for all, such portions only of Southey's will here be given as have not before been printed in either his son's *Life* \* or his son-in-law's *Letters*. † Excluded from both publications, they will yet show probably better than anything in either what there was that formed the curious likeness in unlikeness between these remarkable men.

The time at which they met was when Southey had abandoned his earlier without finding his later opinions, when he was out of Utopia but not yet settled in Old Sarum. He remained still an ardent reformer. But a few months back he had been deploring that Fox should not have died before Pitt, and so been spared the disgrace of pronouncing a panegyric upon such an insolent, empty-headed, long-winded braggadocio ; and not a twelvemonth later, when the *Quarterly Review* suddenly confronted the *Edinburgh*, armed to the teeth against a tyranny which, absolute over poetry as well as politics, had come to be intolerable to many, ‡ he warned the new-comer, which he had helped into life, that he should withdraw straightway from all connection with it if it raised against reformers any cry of Jacobinism. § Expressly, indeed, he declared himself then to be, in terms which Landor might himself have used, for no peace while Bonaparte lived, and for reform as the only means to prevent revolution. But it was less in the opinions they thus held in common, than in their mode of forming and maintaining opinions even widely opposed, that they were unconsciously so like each other. To both belonged the sanguine temperament, the determined self-assertion, and the habit, whether within or beyond the limits where opinion was safe, of free unbridled thinking. To both was too often applicable what Southey said of another friend, that the pride of reason in him left no room or accessibility for any kind of reasoning ; and the weaknesses in both, the inconsistencies, the extreme opinions professed so often without need, were in a great degree referable to this. In the years that followed shortly, when to Southey reform and revolution had come to mean the same thing, not admitting the change in himself, he attributed the whole of it to others, and said the Jacobins that surrounded him were the Anti-Jacobins of his youth, equally unjust and as fero-

\* Six volumes. (Longmans, 1849, 1850.)

† Four volumes. (Longmans, 1856.)

‡ "We shall hoist the bloody flag down alongside that Scotch ship, and engage her yard-arm and yard-arm." (Southey to his brother. *Letters*, II. 114.)

§ "Things are come to this dilemma, *Reform or Ruin* ; and on one of these horns I pray to God that John Bull may give his damned drivers a deadly toss. A constitutional reform would save the country, and nothing short of that will be of any avail." (To Grosvenor Bedford, 21st April, 1809. *Letters*, II. 145.)

cious. Nor was this without truth in a deeper sense than he intended, for in all essential respects he continued what he had formerly been ; and what now most attracted him to Landor was less the agreement in present opinion of which he speaks, than the resemblance in habits of mind of which he was less conscious, and which in their younger days had made both of them rebels to authority. Several expressions to be found in the letters will seem less startling if these few words are remembered.

There is yet also another point on which a word should be said. It belonged to the nobler part of Southey's character that he should take the most exalted view of the calling to which he had devoted himself. He was one of the greatest, and pretty nearly the last, of the genuine men of letters that England has produced, and he honestly believed himself also to be one of the greatest of her poets. He worked hard and got little ; but while his bare maintenance, and hardly that, arose from his work for the day, he labored also without pay at other work for which he knew the rewards must be distant, but appears to have felt they would be absolutely sure. "I was perfectly aware," he said to a friend who had been contrasting one of his epics with a more popular poetical romance, "that I was planting acorns while my contemporaries were setting kidney-beans. The oak will grow, and though I may never sit under its shade, my children will." Three years later than the present date he wrote to Grosvenor Bedford : "I wish you would not call me the most sublime poet of the age, because in this point both Wordsworth and Landor are at least my equals. You will not suspect me of any mock-modesty in this. On the whole I shall have done greater things than either, but not because I possess greater powers." Not that the reader now may smile at them are these things quoted, but to explain still further what it was that knit so close the friendship of which I am speaking, and made it so enduring. Southey's already avowed admiration of Landor's poetry made inexpressibly grateful to him Landor's praise of his own ; and in the pleasure each continued to derive from the other on this point, or, to speak plainly, in their frequently excessive self-laudations, simplicity was more prominent than vanity. In a critical moment, too, the offer to pay for printing more epics had gone straight to Southey's heart, almost sinking at the time from want of all encouragement. *Kehama*, just sketched out, had been flung aside ; and the series that had been meant but to begin with *Joan*, *Thalaba*, and *Madoc*, was in danger of ending with them because of the heaps of all three piled up in the publishers' cellars. "It is more than probable," he wrote to Wynne, "that I should never have written verse again had it not been for an accidental meeting with Landor. I had totally disused the art for the last three years." He told Walter Scott of Landor's princely offer, that it had stung him to the very core ; and as the bite of the tarantula had no cure but dancing, so for this there would be none but



singing. To many other friends he wrote the same, and often he said afterwards that but for Landor *Kehama* would not have been finished and *Roderick* never begun.

Whether the world could not have borne the loss is another question. In this matter appearances at present are against both Southey and Landor; but as, for the latter, appeal is made in this book against them, so for the former it will be fair to say that besides many minor poems which will live with the language, and ballads which are masterpieces of fantastic beauty, the greater poems would seem to have fallen into unmerited neglect. I am not sure whether it might not be put as a test of the existence or otherwise of a pure love of the art in any man that he should like or dislike these achievements of Southey; and if Ariosto is able to retain his readers, it appears hardly creditable to the public taste of our time that Southey should entirely lose his. It is at least certain that for many subtle and pleasing varieties of rhythm, for splendor of invention, for passion and incident sustained often at the highest level, and for all that raises and satisfies wonder and fancy, there will be found in *Thalaba*, *Kehama*, and *Roderick* passages of unrivalled excellence ("perfect," even Byron thought); and these may here excuse, if they do not wholly justify, the hopes that once centred in them, and to which exalted expression is given in the correspondence of the friends.

Their letters will extend, as I have said, over thirty years; and one more remark will fitly close this prelude to them. Whatever fitful or wayward changes were incident to the life of which these pages are the record, and over which already have passed some friendships formed and broken, the intercourse with Southey was to feel no retiring ebb, but to keep always on at the full. As it was at the first, it continued to the end. Through all that estranged Southey's opinions more and more from those with whom he had been most in sympathy, Landor was stanch to him. In every bitterness of the other extreme which Landor did not scruple to indulge, Southey had excuses ready for him. When Byron coupled them in ridicule, Southey seized the occasion to avow that no greater glory could befall his name than that of companionship with Landor's, to have obtained whose approbation as a poet, and possessed his friendship as a man, would be remembered among the honors of his own life when the petty enmities of the generation were forgotten and its ephemeral reputations had passed away. And when that life was nearing to its close, almost the very latest words that Southey was permitted to read with a full consciousness of their meaning were these from the friend whom he had loved so well: "If any man living is ardent in his wishes for your welfare, I am, — whose few and almost worthless merits your generous heart has always overvalued, and whose infinite and great faults it has been too ready to overlook."

## III. FIRST LETTERS TO SOUTHEY.

Landor began his first letter\* to Southey, who had sent him all that was written of *Kehama*† by telling him he had not stoicism enough in his nature to deserve his correspondent's good opinion or his own; yet there were objects of which he never lost sight, and in the pursuit of which he was strenuous and persevering. "While we were together I could not press the offer I made, both because I was unwilling to have it considered as a matter of importance in itself, and because I felt too sensibly how little right I had to the distinction. There are few, I confess, from whom I would have accepted the proposal. I would from you, if I could afford you the highest of luxuries at an inconsiderable price." He then speaks of *Kehama*, intermixing with exalted eulogy skilful objection to its metres, rhymed and unrhymed; excluding novelties of experiment from poetry as not within its lawful province; and very striking in what he says of Pindar and his metrical difficulties.

"The subject you have chosen is magnificent. There is more genius in the conception of this design than in the execution of any recent poem, however perfect. Shall I avow to you that in general I am most delighted with those passages which are in rhyme, and that when I come into the blank verse again my ear *repines*? Are we not a little too fond of novelty and experiment, and is it not reasonable to prefer those kinds of versification which the best poets have adopted and the best judges have cherished for the longest time? In *Samson Agonistes* and in *Thalaba* there are many lines which I could not describe. There are some in *Kehama*. Poetry is intended to soothe and flatter our prepossessions, not to wound or irritate or contradict them. We are at liberty to choose the best modifications, we are not at liberty to change or subvert. We are going too far from our great luminaries. There must be a period; there must be a return from this aphelion.

"You have begun a poem which will be coeval with our language. March on: conciliate first, then conquer. The ears of thousands may be captivated, — the mind and imagination of but few. If Gray had written his *Elegy* in another metre, it would not be the most admired poem in existence. Many would see its disproportions and defects; though proportion has not been studied, or perhaps known, beyond the drama. *Kehama* will admit more diversity than has even been imagined in the works of Pindar.

"I never could perceive that wildness for which Pindar has been traditionally remarked. I could perceive an exquisite taste and an elevation of soul such as never were united, — not even in the historical works of the Jewish writers, not in the Song of Deborah nor of Moses. Ch. Burney is of opinion that we have lost the best works of Pindar. In a little time, however, he will teach people to read the remaining Odes in such a manner as

\* Dated "Sunday evening, May 8" [1808].

† "If he likes it," he wrote to Miss Barker (28th April, 1808), "in good earnest, I will get up at six every morning, and give two fresh hours of morning work to it till it is completed." He told Wynne several months later that he was still borrowing hours from sleep to go on with it, that Landor might not be disappointed. And so he persevered to the close. (*Letters*, II. 60-69, &c.)



to — distinguish them from prose! Is it not humiliating and painful to reflect that a poet who held the second place in the ancient world should have left it a question among those who know his language the most intimately whether his verses have any intrinsic melody, or owed it merely to the music by which they were accompanied? Meanwhile every one satisfied his own ear with the despicable trash of Lycophron and Tryphiodorus. The opposition of iambic and trochaic, in antispastics, may have been suited to opposite choirs and instruments; but I hope the metre and language of our early ballads, which we have no reason to retain, will be banished forever by men of genius from their more elevated works.

"Southey, we have had too much of the lute and of the lyre. We forget that there are louder, graver, more impressive tones. These indeed are not proper for every day; nor is it every day, every century, or every millennium, that we shall see such poems as *Kehama*. I beseech you, Southey, use such materials as have already stood the test. Wildness of conception, energy, passion, character, — magnificent but wild profusion, — all this you can give it; and with this you will confer on it neither a hazardous nor a painful immortality."

His second letter was of twelve days' later date; Southey having meanwhile made battle for his own forms of verse, and propounded a private belief that the whole system of classical metres had been nothing more than a creating of difficulty for the sake of overcoming it. Old intercourse with Parr will be traced in portions of Landor's reply about Catullus, though he has partly forgotten the Doctor's suggestion.\*

"I am delighted at the manner in which you intend to execute your work, and I am certain you will exhibit to the world such combinations of harmony as poetry never yet embraced. You will not, however, bring me over to your opinion that the ancients raised difficulties in their metre for the sake merely of combating and overcoming them. Nor am I indeed of opinion that even the most complicated are so hard to manage as the English blank verse. Recollect their vast resources, their multiform transpositions, their building up and pulling to pieces of words, their particles, their substitutions of one foot for another, and their infinity of synonyms. By how many terms and periphrases might every god, every hero, every country, be designated. Of all the verses in the world, the Greek anapæst is the easiest, — dare I avow it, to me it appears a mark, the only one indeed, of puerility and barbarism in the literature of this illustrious people. Our anapæst on the contrary is beautiful, particularly when alternated in rhyme. The Romans were not unwise in restricting themselves to few metres. The galliambic has been used but once. Catullus, whose taste was the most exquisite *quot sunt quotque fuere aut quotquot aliis erunt in annis*, was forced into it by his subject. Perhaps he translated a poem he found in Bithynia. The *caste* is Greek, the style is not Roman. A single word of it is a sufficient proof to me that he was merely the translator: —

Tŷmpănũm | tubam | Cybe | les.

A Roman would not make an anapæst of *tympanum*; a Grecian would write *τύπανον*. No one will be so silly as to imagine he wrote a trochaic; for if a single foot is so, the remainder of the verse is, as far as the dimeter iambic goes. But I am doing in this letter as I did, I believe, in my last: I am writing as if I paid no attention to your remarks."

\* See *ante*, p. 98.

Southey's remarks, put strongly in both letters, had been to urge him to write. Write in English, he said, because it is a better language than Latin; "but if you will not write English, write Latin; and in God's name overcome that superstition about Robert Smith. When I consider what he is, it puts me out of all patience to think that the ghost of what he has been should overlay you like a nightmare."\* Other remarks also he had made, on what he had heard of affairs in Bath. He wished Landor were married; wished he were as much Quaker as himself; wished above all he would throw aside Rousseau, and make Epictetus his manual. To all which Landor replied, bringing Ianthe herself into the sober presence:—

"The reason I have given over poetry is this. I think it better not to have cut the dragon's teeth than to have sowed them. What a rabble of enemies are raised up about one at every new publication! There are thousands who may vex me, there are few who can delight or amuse me; added to which, I either feel or fancy that I am as fond of another's good poetry as of my own. But alas! I *do* want stoicism for everything. I once resolved to attain it. What was the result? Your slave, your Epictetus, was pursued and punished.

"Shall I give you an elegy I have written:—

*Vita brevi fugitura! prior fugitura venustas!  
Hoc saltem exiguo tempore duret amor.*

These opening verses pleased me. I repeated them one morning in the presence of Ianthe. She held me by both ears till I gave her the English:—

Soon, O Ianthe, life is o'er,  
And sooner beauty's playful smile!  
Kiss me, and grant what I implore,  
Let love remain that little while."

I will spare the reader the rest of his Latin elegy, not one of the two-and-thirty more verses of which did he spare his friend; winding up the close of his letter also in characteristic fashion:—

"I once thought of publishing a collection of Latin poems, in which I had written remarks on those of R. Smith, Fox, Frere, Canning, Addison, Milton, May, Buchanan, Pitcairn, Cowley, and half a dozen more of our countrymen. These notices in general were not much longer than yours to the English Poets. Here are two specimens: 'FOXIUM, cæteroquin præ rivalibus suis clarum, poetam parcius laudaverim. Erat ei mitis, et dum luderet, sapientia; castigati sales; verborum persæpe, nonnunquam rerum penuria; interdum frigus animi, quod lenem spiritum faventes vocitarent.' 'De CANINIO dicam quod sentio: nemo enim mortalium tanti est ut me mendacem faciat. Bene res malas scripsit, nec bona male. Dolendum est obscuros atque infimos nebulones a poetis pessimis insequendis revocasse, in viros illustres optimosque incitasse, nec novisse seipsum esse temnendum, quando alios temnere pertinaciter, magnoque cum suo cruciati simulare.' We really do want some Elegant Extracts of the modern latinists. Many fine specimens are recoverable. I wonder some German has not done it. I have pointed out the bad poetry and the false metre of Sir William Jones

\* Omitted in the *Life*, III. 144. Another omission on the same page may be worth appending. "Your £2," says Southey, "has been paid to the subscription for the Grasmere orphans. Enough has been raised to provide for their well-being and well-doing."



— I correct myself: you cannot *point out* the bad poetry of this worthy man, but you may lay your hand upon it. Yes, both your hands. Gyas might lay all his even, if each of them were as large as the whole bodies of his brotherhood, and extended *novem per jugera*."

The second consignment of *Kehama* manuscript lies before me, scrawled over with innumerable addresses. It had gone to the Hotwells, Clifton. It had followed to Pulteney House, Bath, and to the South Parade. London and Brighton had been tried; and it had overtaken Landor at last in Falmouth! From the latter place he writes to acknowledge it, and one may fancy the amazement with which Southey read these words. "Nothing I do, whether wise or foolish, will create much surprise in those who know my character. I am going to Spain. In three days I shall have sailed. At Brighton, one evening, I preached a crusade to two auditors. Inclination was not wanting, and in a few minutes everything was fixed. I am now about to express a wish at which your gentler and more benevolent soul will shudder. May every Frenchman out of France perish! May the Spaniards not spare one! No calamities can chain them down from their cursed monkey-tricks; no generosity can bring back to their remembrance that a little while since they mimicked, till they really thought themselves, free men. Detestable race, profaners of republicanism, — since the earth will not open to swallow them all up, may even kings partake in the glory of their utter extermination! I am learning, night and morning, the Spanish language. I ought not to give my opinion of it at present; but I confess it appears to me such as I should have expected to hear spoken by a Roman slave, sulky from the bastinado. I hope to join the Spanish army immediately on my landing, and I wish only to fight as a private soldier. There is nothing in this unless it could be known what I have left for it, and, having left, have lost."\*

It was a kind of loss which his sister more wisely would have thought his gain; but at the step thus suddenly taken his family were as much startled as his friends. He had mentioned it to no one. The act followed close upon the thought of it, and he was gone before any one could have reasoned with him. But as we look back upon it now, and recall some of the circumstances that immediately impelled it, we may possibly find in it, besides the quixotic rashness, something generous and noble.

#### IV. IN SPAIN.

Napoleon's attempt to convert Spain and Portugal into dependencies of France was the turning-point of his fortunes. When he conceived that design he had all Europe, excepting England, at his feet, and nothing seemed easier than its completion. To one who had

\* The letter has simply the date: "Falmouth, Wed. Eve." The postmark is 8th August, 1808.

struck down the whole of Germany and made a satellite of Russia, what danger could there possibly be in overturning the Peninsular thrones, one of them for years the most abject of his vassals, and the other the most despicable of his adversaries? Yet his ruin dates from his perfidy against them.

The plot had been in progress some time before its real drift was suspected. Both countries had been overrun with French troops, and the miserable Bourbon princes had been kidnapped, before the presence of Joseph Bonaparte at Madrid told the whole treacherous story. A kind of dumb amazement and acquiescence was at first the only feeling awakened. Resistance by that time seemed dead beyond the hope or power of revival. Spain had no treasury and no army. Her soldiers had been carried off to the north of Europe, a hundred thousand French veterans were in their place, and French troops garrisoned her strongest fortresses. Humanly speaking, all help and hope had come to an end when the world was unexpectedly enthralled by such a sight as even that century had not witnessed.

The Spanish people themselves arose in mass against their invaders. All over the country there sprang suddenly into life local bodies called Juntas, by whom the powers of government were seized and exercised with a success proportioned to their resolution and audacity. The flame that had at first risen highest in Seville overspread the land with marvellous rapidity. French fleets were seized and French garrisons found themselves isolated in fortresses supposed to be impregnable. Armies were created and organized; a free press was established; the peasantry, self-formed into guerilla bands, strengthened everywhere the national levies; and in the very girls and women of Spain the French soldiers found avenging furies. It seemed as if at last the conquering career of Napoleon had been stayed in the presence of a power grander than any arrayed against it by the old governments. From the spirit of patriotism and liberty which had originally been the strength of France men now believed that her weakness and her downfall were to come.

To say that the enthusiasm created by these events in most parts of England was frantic is to employ no misplaced term. But what was done thereon, from its ignoble beginnings to its noble end, is matter of history, and excluded from these pages. History, however, scarcely tells us how deeply individuals were moved, as, in broken and exaggerated fragments, piece by piece, the glorious news came over. The shouts of towns and cities far off, says Wordsworth, found echo in the vales and hills around him; where "the hopes and fears of suffering Spain" had been equally in all men's hearts. Everywhere, too, expectation went as far beyond probability or reason as the exploits that had aroused it. Castanos and Baylen, Palafox and Saragoza, names hardly known to this generation, became watch-words over England; and when King Joseph was reported to have fled from Madrid, it was as if Napoleon himself had been tumbled from his



throne. Coleridge, then living in Grasmere Vale, has related how they would, he and Wordsworth together, often and often walk out to the Raise Gap as late as two o'clock in the morning to meet the Keswick carrier with the newspaper. It was a time unparalleled in history, exclaimed Southey, "and a more glorious one never has and never can be exhibited to the world." And, just at the time when he was saying this, the excitement had fallen upon still more inflammable stuff in Landor's breast, with the result that we have seen. He was for action, not talking. He resolved to go out as a volunteer. He took money to contribute to the common stock, and would himself lead into battle the troops he should have equipped and armed. Very quixotic; yet at the heart of it also something of a generous grandeur. If a more settled earnestness of purpose had but entered into it!

Unfortunately of such enterprises in general it is to be said that they fail as a matter of course. The fine-hearted and hair-brained make an ill match; unprofitable for the most part, and barren of issue. There can be no sufficient calculation and no adequate provision. Something there was, in the present case, of glory in having been the first English volunteer that set foot in Spain; but this was about all achieved by it or got out of it. At Corunna Charles Stuart was envoy; attached in a friendly way to his mission was Charles Robert Vaughan of All Souls, Oxford, who had been at Rugby with Landor; and to Corunna Landor first went. His two companions to whom he refers in his letter to Southey were both Irishmen, an O'Hara and a Fitzgerald. Upon reaching Corunna he sent to the governor ten thousand reals for relief of the town of Venturada, burnt to the ground by the French. At the same time, in a letter accompanying his gift, he stated his intention to join at once the army of Blake; and declared that whatever volunteers were ready to join him, though to the number of a thousand, he was ready to pay their expenses, to travel with them on foot, and to fight along with them; desiring no other glory than to serve under any brave Spaniard in arms for defence of religion and liberty. By the supreme council of Castile, to which the governor straightway sent the money and the letter, both were gratefully received; the reals were deposited in the National Bank, and the governor was instructed to express to Mr. Landor the high sense which the council entertained of his generosity, his valor, and his honorable enthusiasm.\*

\* The subjoined is taken from *Saunders's Dublin News Letter and Daily Advertiser* of Monday the 3d October, 1808, which now lies before me.

"The Governor of Corunna has addressed the following letter to Don Arias Mon, Dean of the Supreme Council of Castile:—

"Illustrious Sir,—On the 24th an English gentleman, accompanied by two Irish gentlemen, delivered to me a letter to this effect:—

"I take the liberty to present, through the medium of your respectable authority, a small offering of ten thousand reals for the unfortunate town of Venturada, destroyed on account of its loyalty to its king by most cruel and ferocious enemies. Two Irish

In the interval between the enrolment of his troop, which was formed at once, and their departure for head-quarters, a misunderstanding occurred with the English envoy. Landor applied to himself an expression of Stuart's overheard by him at one of the meetings of the junta, which undoubtedly was meant for another person. The matter might easily have been cleared up, but he did not even make the attempt. On the way with his volunteers to Blake's army he wrote from Villa Franca an intemperate letter to Vaughan, and printed it both in Spanish and English before any reply could reach him. In or near Aguilar he remained nearly three months, engaged in petty skirmishing, and fretting at the inaction of the northern division and its general. Then, what the alleged affront of the envoy had begun, the affair of Cintra and its disasters completed; his troop dispersed or melted away; and he came back to England in as great a hurry as he had left it.

At his return he told Southey that he wished greatly to have seen Madrid, but he was afraid a battle might be fought in his absence, and the mortification of not being present at it would have killed him. "In this expectation I remained nearly three months in the neighborhood of the Gallician army, sometimes at Rejñosa, sometimes at Aguilar. I returned to Bilbao after the French had entered. I had the satisfaction of serving three launches with powder and muskets, and of carrying on my shoulders six or seven miles a child too heavy for its exhausted mother. These are things without difficulty and without danger; yet they please, independently of gratitude or applause. I was near being taken the following day. This would have been exceedingly unpleasant, as I had already sent the letter to Vaughan and Stuart, and myself and the envoy must meet." He described Aguilar at that time as an open town consisting chiefly and almost entirely of one broad street; and said, in proof of the strange mistakes as well as fatal inaction of Blake, that while his main force was at the town, he was himself a mile on the east, and had so stationed his cannon on the west, near a ford, that a regiment of horse might have surprised and spiked it.

"Ah," said Southey afterwards, when he was writing *Roderick*, "it is much for a poet to have traversed the scenes in which the subject

gentlemen (Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. O'Hara), men of the first families of their country, accompany me, and are desirous of proceeding with me to the army of General Blake. If there are any volunteers in this town, or in the kingdom, who may wish to accompany me, though their number should amount to one thousand, I shall with much pleasure pay the expenses of their journey, travel with them on foot, and fight along with them, glorying to serve under the command of any brave Spaniard who has taken up arms in defence of religion and liberty.

W. SAVAGE LANDOR.

"The said ten thousand reals being in my hands, I inform you thereof, in order that publication may be made in the *Court Gazette*, and the money appropriated for the benefit of the unfortunate town of Venturada.

A. ALCECO.

"Corunna, August 26."

"The Council ordered the above ten thousand reals to be transmitted to the National Bank for the use of the people of Venturada, and directed the Governor of Corunna to express to Mr. Landor and the two Irish gentlemen the high sense which the Council entertains of their generosity, valor, and honorable enthusiasm."



of his poem is laid. It gave you an advantage in *Count Julian*." It is certainly not difficult to understand, after reading what has just been quoted, the double meanings in Landor's mind in some of the earlier scenes of his tragedy, when its hero, in arms against his countrymen, is praising their simplicity of character : —

" If strength be wanted for security,  
Mountains the guard, forbidding all approach  
With iron-pointed and uplifted gates,  
Thou wilt be welcome too in Aguilar,  
Impenetrable, marble-turreted,  
Surveying from aloft the limpid ford,  
The massive fane, the sylvan avenue;  
Whose hospitality I proved myself,  
A willing leader in no impious war  
When fame and freedom urged me; or mayst dwell  
In Reñosa's dry and thriftless dale,  
Unharvested beneath October moons,  
Among those frank and cordial villagers."

Such was Landor's raid into Spain; as to which I will now only give such further illustrations, from his own and the envoy's letters, as may still be read with interest. They will also tell what the Spaniards themselves thought of the service rendered them, and what return they made for it.

Here is his own description of his voyage to Corunna : —

"The commencement of my journey did not augur a prosperous continuance or a happy termination. I arrived at Falmouth when the packets had sailed two hours, and was detained at that wretched place eight days. At last I went on board, and the wind was favorable; but while the sailors were filling the casks, it changed again suddenly, and we were buffeted or becalmed on the Atlantic five days more. The water had been put into foul casks, and it could not be more putrid if it had been carried round the world. The tea seemed originally to have had some connection with tobacco, and had formed a fresh family compact in the voyage. There was not a lemon on board; but we found a few blighted figs and rotten apples. As we approached Cape Prior, we discovered a French privateer. Apprehensive that she might capture some of the transports that were carrying our troops to Lisbon, I asked Captain Atkins why he did not engage. She was then only at the distance of a mile from our frigate. The captain said that the packets had positive orders to the contrary; but in fact the ship was larger and the guns much heavier than ours. We continued two whole days within sight of Corunna. The wind was violent, and the vessel received some material damage. At last we entered the harbor, and were greeted with all the alacrity of pleasure by our new allies." \*

Something of what happened in his march between Corunna and Villa Franca I find in other letters, which contain also delightful glimpses of the country and characteristics of that part of Galicia.

\* A letter from Captain Atkins dated the 13th November, 1808, acknowledges gratefully a gift of a compass which Landor had sent him; says it will remind him always "of the many pleasant and instructive hours passed with the giver, notwithstanding the prevalence of many adverse gales in a very leaky ship"; and, describing the defects in the latter as having been "found considerably alarming," adds that he is nevertheless under immediate orders to join the commander-in-chief, Lord Gambier. In one of the very next engagements he lost his life.

"At Lugo we took up our abode at a posada just beyond the walls. Near it was a magazine of brandy, wine, and corn. About midnight we were awakened by a blaze brighter than the day. Our first idea was that a party of French horse had surprised the city. We threw on our clothes, seized our swords and pistols, and discovered immediately under our window vast torrents of flame. We hastened to the spot, and in a few minutes the guard had assembled with the governor and his officers. He thanked us very cordially for our co-operation in extinguishing the fire. There was no engine in the town, and I had recommended to throw as much dust as could be collected wherever the conflagration was extending. This method perfectly succeeded. The principal church here is partly ancient, partly modern. The walls are of very remote antiquity. The surrounding scenery, particularly towards Astorga, is grand, although enclosed and cultivated. Near the city the fences are of stone; farther on, they are live and wild; but I remarked that the rose and honeysuckle were not to be found amongst them so frequently as in England. The birds, too, were silent. We heard, instead of them, loud and wearisome hymns, the tune eternally the same, and one incessant noise of cart-wheels creaking on wooden axles. About a quarter of a mile beyond the bridge the road is supported by a wall, and from this place the river Minho on the right presents the appearance of a lake, in the midst of lofty chestnuts. We rested at another posada three leagues and a half from Lugo. The window, or rather the small aperture which had escaped the shutters, showed us a narrow dell bounded by romantic hills, on one of which was a single spot of the most vivid verdure, and on another a small intrenchment. In this country some honey is produced, but here is little corn, little cattle, and no wine. The bread, which they informed me was white as the bread of Lugo, was indebted for its whiteness to the sand with which it was mixed. We proceeded to the house of Don Josef Manuel Gomez, at Basside. It was hardly a league farther. Here we slept. The land is fertile and well wooded, but on the 1st of September I saw some barley only six or seven inches high. Some standard peaches in the garden were also laden with unripe fruit. In fact this part of Galicia is certainly later than many in England, though the fruit more rarely fails and grows in more abundance. Throughout a distance of ninety miles I have not seen an elm or an ash. This, though incomparably the most valuable of trees, is perhaps the most neglected in the whole of Europe, and its nature the worst understood. Its timber is of a firmer texture when it grows in an elevated situation, for which it is peculiarly adapted by the toughness and flexibility of its branches. It could resist the wind and snow where any other tree would split, and where very few would vegetate. We reached Nocera, a lovely little village; then la posada de Castro, and el castel de los Moros on the left, twenty-seven leagues from Corunna. About half a league farther is the sweetest vale divided into enclosures of irregular forms, hardly one of them a quarter of an acre. A brook runs amongst them, whose innumerable mazes it is impossible to trace: the fields, the trees, and the waters seem all in infancy and all at play. Before us lay a wide extent of ploughed upland with interspersed clumps of chestnuts. Here was no species of herbage, but it was covered with sheep. This is the only instance in which I observed them on the fallows. Such bold and diversified scenery would have been admired in an English park. It wanted but verdure and deer, accompaniments (but not essentials) to the picturesque. About a league farther we reached Villa Franca."



From Villa Franca was written his ill-advised letter to Vaughan; and of the impetuous mistake that suggested it something must be said. Shortly after his arrival he was received at the palace of the junta during one of their sittings, when Stuart had attended hastily not only to introduce his countryman, but also to obtain liberation for a Spanish official on his way to Monte Video, whom the junta, upon false information, had placed under arrest, and of whom, among other things, Stuart told them that the poor man was distracted, and had no money to support him at Corunna. He had been talking just before to the junta of the services proposed to be rendered by Landor; and in the confusion that prevailed, the latter, believing himself still to be referred to, overheard the words unquestionably meant for the other, *il est fou, il n'a pas l'argent*, which he straightway applied to himself, and made the text of his letter to Vaughan.

"They were spoken in that half-formed and that half-stifled voice which deep malignity is apt to utter, but has not the power to modulate or manage. He would not dare to use such language openly; and on his return to England, whenever he gives me the opportunity, I will teach him that if any one speaks of me, his tone must be lower, or his remarks must be more true. You, who remember me in my earliest years, remember that I was distinguished — was it either as a liar or a fool? Inform him if ever I broke my word, or ever endured an insult. I made no reply at the time to his calumnies and his insolence. I thanked him for his offers of service. Though I consider him as merely a petty envoy to a province, yet I consider also what is due both to the Spanish and the English nation. No action is recorded more heroic than that of Louis XIV. towards the Duc de Lausun. When the king received a gross and grievous insult from his subject, he rose, threw his cane out of the window, and made this calm reply: 'I should be sorry to have caned a duke and peer of France.' Vaughan, I should be sorry to have *done* what I may not be sorry to *do*. I have been able to restrain my impetuosity, but I will not conceal my disdain. I entertain the highest and most inviolable respect for whatever is in office under the king and constitution of my country. The forbearance I have shown, and even the letter I am writing, will controvert the charge of imbecility, as surely as the same charge would be proved by whatever is intemperate or coarse. The ten thousand reals (why am I forced to mention them?) which I paid into the hands of the governor at Corunna, and a daily allowance of full pay to every soldier I am leading to the armies, together with some occasional gratuities to keep up their spirits on the march, are presumptive proof that the calculations of Mr. S. are groundless, frivolous, and false."

A man who could have reasoned however slightly with his anger might at once have detected, in the very language employed by himself, much stronger presumptive proof against his own calculations. "I made no reply at the time to his calumnies and insolence. I thanked him for his offers of service." Any one indeed must have been himself a fool, as Stuart afterwards said, to whom the occasion of offering thanks for service should have presented itself also as a fitting one for insolence to the person rendering it. The extracts

that follow not only exonerate Stuart, but show him in a very pleasing light; and the mention of what else was in Landor's offensive letter may be limited to what further it tells of what occurred to him in Spain. He declares himself grateful for the marks of distinction conferred on him by the venerable Bishop of Orense, and for the respect freely paid him by every Spaniard of rank or consequence with whom he had conversed. He tells the junta of Corunna that he can yearly, without inconvenience, save sufficient for the accomplishment of every offer he has made, and cannot apply it with more lasting pleasure to any other purpose than the advancement of their cause. And he expresses his fixed intention to reach the camp, and to conduct to head-quarters the men intrusted to his care, in time for the battle then immediately expected.

STUART TO VAUGHAN: MADRID, 18TH OCTOBER, 1808.

"Don Benito de Novoa will certify that Mr. Landor must have misunderstood me, and that the language he alludes to could not have been directed against him. On the contrary, I one day cited Mr. Landor's handsome offer to the junta as a proof of the good-will and enthusiasm towards Spain which animates Englishmen; and knowing from you the talents, fortune, and character of that gentleman, I should have been mad or a fool myself had I been base enough to depreciate his exertions in so good a cause, who have myself descended from my own rank in the service to engage heartily in favor of Spanish liberty on Spanish ground. You were the bearer of a message to Mr. Landor expressing my regret for our departure at the moment of his arrival in Corunna; and afterwards the same circumstance in Lugo would not permit me to show him the civilities I desired. I would willingly have furnished him with such recommendations to the army as I could give him; and I actually requested General Broderick, when he passed through Lugo, to forward his efforts in the cause of Spain by every facility which his situation at head-quarters could command."\*

VAUGHAN TO LANDOR: SANGUESA, 1ST NOVEMBER, 1808.

"The kind inclination I know to have been professed towards you by Mr. Stuart, and what he had learned from me of your fortune and talents, convince me that whenever he made use of those expressions in your hearing it must have been with respect to some other person. So highly did he think of your conduct that I know it was his intention to communicate to the Central Junta what you had done and offered to do in their favor, suggesting at the same time that they should give you some mark of their approbation or thanks. I ought to regret that under my name unpleasant language should have been conveyed to a gentleman for whom I have the most affectionate regard, and for whose talents I have the highest respect; but I rejoice in an occasion of relieving from a painful impression the feelings of an old school-fellow."

\* This is confirmed by several allusions to this general, and his friendly co-operation, in Landor's letters. When criticising Southey's history in one of his letters of March, 1821, he writes: "The capture of Blake at Seville with all his army explains to me what I suspected. General Broderick told me he could obtain no confidence from him. I replied, 'Then have none in him.' Romana would have acted differently. I should be glad to see your reasons for the strange inaction of the Gallician army, when the French had fled across the Ebro."



STUART TO LANDOR: ARANJUEZ, 14TH NOVEMBER, 1808.

"I learn with much regret that I had the misfortune unintentionally to offend you at Corunna, and I hasten to clear up a mistake which appears to have given rise to sentiments in your mind very different from those I have always entertained respecting yourself, since I witnessed your conduct in this country.

"I can assure you I do not recollect the conversation you state to have passed between myself and Don B. de Novoa the evening I saw you in the junta; and I solemnly declare upon my honor that if such expressions fell from my lips, they neither applied to you nor to any friend of yours. I could not oppose or calumniate an undertaking which every motive of interest and zeal called on me to support; nor is it compatible with my character to hold language to the personal prejudice of any Englishman, knowing it to be false. I could not be ignorant of your talents, which are manifested in writings well received by the world and were evident from your conversation; our mutual friend Mr. Vaughan bore testimony to your fortune and rank in life; and your character was fully proved by your exertions in favor of Spain. I was myself embarked in the same cause; and having been commissioned by government to ascertain the wants of the Spaniards, and to transmit them particulars of every description until an envoy should be appointed, is it likely that I should counteract the zeal of others laboring to the same purpose?

"Though I never made a merit of language in your favor at the time, I feel now compelled to tell you that I repeatedly desired the junta of Corunna to hold up your conduct as an example to other individuals equally well disposed. The distance of Galicia will not allow me to send you the assurance of Novoa that such is the case; but I transmit the copy of a letter from the president of that junta who was present on the day you allude to, which (notwithstanding his mistakes) will prove the truth of my assertions. I have also written to Vaughan at Laregovia, who I doubt not will do the same. If, however, their letters are not sufficient to show that I am incapable of animosity to a person engaged in such a cause, I presume you will be convinced by the enclosed answer from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to a note I transmitted to the Central Junta detailing the services you have rendered to Spain. Honorary rank in their army can be no object to one in your situation; and though it is the only mode of distinction hitherto conferred on any Englishman by the central government, I should have declined their offer, had not the consideration that you may like a character giving you a right to repair to the head-quarters of their armies when you please induced me rather to wait for your own determination.

"When Mr. Vaughan returns to Madrid on his way home, I shall request him to deliver to you the original letters which have passed on the subject; and if they are satisfactory, I hope I may look forward to shake hands with you as a well-wisher of that country wherever we meet.

The letter of the president of the junta of Corunna, the Count Gimondi, proved the circumstances as I have stated them, and was a triumphant exculpation of Stuart; the letter of the Spanish minister (Cevallos) conveyed to Landor, with handsome expressions of esteem, the honorary rank of colonel in the service of King Ferdinand; and in the *Madrid Gazette* of a few days' later date were published the

thanks of the Supreme Junta "to Mr. Landor," not alone for gallant personal service, but for his gifts of twice ten thousand reals in aid of Spanish independence and freedom.

Not a great many years later, when the restored Ferdinand had restored the Jesuits, Landor sent back his commission in a letter to that same Don Pedro Cevallos, telling him that he had done his best for Spanish liberty against Napoleon, and could not continue even nominally in the service of a worse perjurer and traitor.

#### V. LETTERS TO SOUTHEY ON SPAIN AND SPANIARDS.

The time when Landor again set foot in England was that of the arrival from Portugal of the news of the convention of Cintra, by which the entire French army, at the expense of the English government, had been safely conducted back to France. Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir Harry Burrard were its authors; and Sir Arthur Wellesley had not resisted it, though he had never given it his approval. On all sides there were shouts of reproach. "But in spite of their allies," wrote Landor at his arrival to his friend, "the Spaniards will be victorious. Can we never be disgraced but the only good people in the universe must witness it? Under the influence of what demon is it that we are forced to periodical wrecks of honor on the Spanish coast? *Lord Douglas sees me fall!* If nothing personal had driven me home, still I could not have endured the questions of brave and generous Spaniards, — why we permitted the French to retain their plunder, why we placed them again in array against Spain, why we snatched them from the fury of the Portuguese, why we indulged them with more precious fruits than they could have gathered from the completest victory?" To which, after expressing his gladness at his friend's return, and referring to Stuart as its supposed principal cause in terms more offensive than Landor's own, Southey thus breaks out: "I am sure that for the first week after the news arrived, had Sir Hew Dalrymple appeared in any part of England, he would have been torn in pieces. My cry was, *Break the terms and deliver up the wretch who signed them to the French, with a rope round his neck!* This is what OLIVER CROMWELL would have done. O Christ! — this England, this noble country, — that hands so mighty and a heart so sound should have a face all leprosy, and a head fit for nothing but the vermin that burrow in it!" That was pretty well, but was not all. He went on to say that he and Wordsworth had been trying to get up a county petition against the "damned convention"; but "Lord Lonsdale had received mum as the word of command from those who move his strings, and he moves the puppets of two counties." A court of inquiry to be sure was talked of, he says with scorn; but the only court to do any good would be one that should send "the hand of Sir Hew Dalrymple to be nailed upon the pillery at Lisbon, and that of Sir Arthur Wellesley for a



like exposition at Madrid" (!) And then, after sketching what England with better advisers might have done, he uses expressions that will perhaps help to make more lenient some judgments of Landor's modes of speech to be considered hereafter. "But nothing can or will go on well in this country till the besom of destruction has swept the land clean. When Joseph gets back to Madrid, it would not surprise me if Spain were to produce a tyrannicide. He who should do the deed should stand next to Brutus in my kalendar."\*

Other confidences had passed between the friends at this first interchange of letters on Landor's return, which it will be only just to him also to quote, for such qualification or correction of remarks already made as they may fairly suggest. They are themselves a curious comment on his recent flight into Spain. "I believe," he said, at the close of his letter, which bears the postmark of November, 1808, "I should have been a good and happy man if I had married. My heart is tender. I am fond of children and of talking childishly. I hate to travel even two stages. Never without a pang do I leave the house where I was born. Even a short stay attaches me to any place. But, Southey, I love a woman who will never love me, and am beloved by one who never ought. I do not say I shall never be happy. I shall be often so, if I live; but I shall never be at rest. My evil genius drags me through existence against the current of my best inclinations. I have practised self-denial, because it gives me a momentary and false idea that I am firm; and I have done some other things not amiss, in compliance with my heart; but my most virtuous hopes and sentiments have uniformly led to misery, and I never have been happy but in consequence of some weakness or some vice." To which Southey, at once laying bare the source of these self-accusings and self-exaltings, wisely as well as neatly replied that what he learnt from *Rousseau*, before he laid Epictetus to his heart, was that Julia was happy with a husband whom she had not loved, and that Wolmar was more to be admired than St. Preux. He bade no man beware of being poor as he grows old, but he would have all men beware of solitariness in old age. His advice to his friend therefore was that he should find out a woman he could esteem, and love would grow more surely out of esteem than esteem would out of love.

\* The various passages and expressions here quoted are omitted from the letter as printed (*Life*, III. 195-198). Other omissions there are also, of which one having a personal bearing may be subjoined: "How has your health held out? Even ordinary travelling in Spain requires a patient body to bear up against broken rest and heating food. I am glad this beastly blockhead has been of so much use in the system of things as to force you home; your life would else in all likelihood have been sacrificed inadequately. It was likely you might die a martyr; but there would be such an unfitness in your falling by the hand of a fool that I have no apprehensions upon that score." By the date of his next letter (January, 1809), Landor had received Stuart's explanations. "Mr. Stuart has declared that he never could apply those expressions to me which I resented, and offers peace. I always accept this offer." It was a pity he did not regret at the same time the wrong he had plainly done. "The Central Junta," he adds, "has given me an honorary commission which confers the privilege of being always at head-quarters. I had taken leave of the generals and the government."

*Experto crede Roberto.* It was the advice of one who by such means had quieted a nature little less tempestuous than his own.

But by the time this discreet advice was in his friend's hands, the self-blaming, self-pitying mood had passed away. To the outburst of grief and reproach that followed Moore's retreat and death at Corunna there had now succeeded bitter storms of attack, recrimination, and controversy; and Landor was plunged in the thick of them. He replied to Southey by sending in a printed pamphlet three dashing letters which he had written to one of the generals (Riguelme),\* whose acquaintance he had made in Spain. They were not such as to satisfy his friend, who remonstrated with him for not speaking kindly of the Portuguese, and thought him hard upon even some of the English agents in the war. Nay, retorted Landor, the occasion is lost, and perhaps never will return. The time when few men would have done what many will not do now was passed away, as he feared irrecoverably. Southey did not essentially differ from him, but was hampered by his new connections in the *Quarterly*; and not small was Landor's surprise to hear that he had consented to defend Frere in the next review against the friends of Sir John Moore. Frere, Ellis, and Canning had been Southey's keenest assailants in the *Anti-Jacobin*; but their alliance against the *Edinburgh* had been swift in wiping out animosities, as any one might have foreseen, though Southey was still far from conscious of the extent of the change in himself. With some pain, but with more surprise, he received Landor's next letter. It was dated July, 1809.

"I am curious to see your defence of Mr. Frere. It will require the exertion of all your ingenuity. He, I understand, was among the people who wrote against you in the *Anti-Jacobin*. This alone could render the undertaking pleasant and triumphant. But alas! his defence must necessarily be some disparagement to one of the best among soldiers and among men. Had he addressed to me the insolent and presumptuous language he addressed to General Moore, I would have taken him by the hand on his return, and have granted him three hours for business and devotion. The messages and notes he sent are not to be considered as from an ambassador: the language is personal and beyond his office. In punishing his offence, therefore, I should remember an ancient custom,—they scourged before they executed; although I might here be sorry for so much severity, as he wrote some good pentameters, either at school or after."

This bitterness was hardly in excess of the occasion; and there are few that will not think it honorable to Landor, who look back to the letters of Frere used then to discredit Moore's memory. The fame of this great soldier has since had ample vindication, but was at that time in imminent peril; and the instinct which brought loyalty to his aid so eager a friend to the Spaniards as Landor had shown himself was a noble and true one. I subjoin the rest of his letter.

\* "I wish for many reasons," wrote Landor to Southey, in May, 1819, "that General Riguelme were living, among the rest, because after a few days' acquaintance he felt a sincere friendship for me, and because he promised to give me such information as would have been useful to your history."



"In his [Frere's] correspondence with the excellent Moore, he runs on with a total assumption and utter ignorance of facts, — with all the tartness, petulance, impudence, and self-sufficiency of an only son among his country neighbors in his first vacation from the university. The only letters, official or private, containing any correct information of importance to the general, was addressed to him by the Duque del Infantado. It was dated December 13th. Mr. Frere did not forward it until December 22d. The packet, we now know, was unsealed by Sir John Moore's executors. The French entered Madrid on the 4th. Yet in a letter of the 14th he says, '*All the reports from Madrid represent the force of the French as much reduced. No official report has yet been received of the capitulation of Madrid, nor is it by any means certain that any formal stipulation existed.*' This is the language of a man who attempts to conceal from a wiser than himself a truth which he ought to have sounded and transmitted. By what means could he imagine was the force of the French reduced? Among the reports *from* Madrid, was not a single one of them less favorable? Were the gates open to falsehood only? Did not a breath transpire which might either have proceeded from or have tended towards truth? So, an English ambassador does not know what has happened in the capital of a country to which he was delegated, — does not know even an event so striking as the reduction of that capital itself five days before the intelligence was published through every other capital in Europe, ten days after the fact. Such vanity and incapacity have often existed in statesmen and ambassadors, but such proofs have never been so palpable nor crowded into so confined a space. If the untimely death of a character so illustrious and so nearly perfect as Moore would allow us to laugh at anything that reminds us of him, it would be laughable enough to look at those subscriptions at the bottom of Mr. Frere's letters. The formularies of diplomacy neither force nor authorize an ambassador to say, 'I am with great truth and respect, sir, your most obedient humble servant.' But when a fellow has written not only without truth but with absolute rudeness, — when he has told another he would disgrace the British arms and bring ruin on the country he was sent to succor and support, — how can he pretend to assert his truth in offering his respect? If the ludicrous is founded on the inconsistent, here surely is its very pinnacle. It reminds me in some novel I have read — I believe in *Hugh Trevor* — of a curious flourish at the end of every letter from a knavish old steward to a foolish old master. I thought, in reading the book, it was a singular stroke of character and a happy one."

Southey still had a word to say for Frere, thinking the ambassador might have shown more spirit than the general; but he left the writing of the defence to Ellis. The tone of his letter was also such as to propitiate Landor, to whom he announced his intention of writing such a history of 1808 as would give him real pleasure. It was a task in which Scott had engaged him for an Edinburgh Annual Register, to be started by the Ballantynes. Landor would like the bitterness and "undissembled contempt" which he should there find bestowed upon all parties alike. For indeed he found himself in agreement with his friend as to the way in which the war had been mismanaged; and in despising the "miserable ins and outs" among the same sets of feeble politicians, who had all been tried and found

wanting. Had ever a game been played so wretchedly that might so easily have been won? Had he seen Wordsworth's pamphlet on the Cintra convention? In spite of a difficult style, he would admire its true eloquence and true philosophy. Landor's reply is highly characteristic. It is dated August, 1809.

"This work of Wordsworth is vigorous and just. My opinion of the Spaniards is corrected by the experience of Moore. I believe no breed of people to be so good; but they have nothing to fight for, and nobody to lead them if they had. The heads of nations must often be stirred, and occasionally be removed. The water that one year is covered with lilies and lotuses, in another may contract a film, and in a few after may have nothing but weeds above and mud below. I like idle people, — they are not rapacious. It is from rapacity most evils originate. At all events it is not from working in the field of battle that the Spaniard is to procure more comforts; and I cannot blame him if he sees on his farm a swarm of bees with more pleasure than a legion of locusts. All old governments are bad, and my breech shall never go to the ground by resting on one. We are a great people, because our constitution by eternal changes is exempt from any violent. It has always been pervious both to light and winds. Else, like those of France and Germany, it would have been uprooted at the first tempest. Adieu. *Vive vaeque.*"

From Clifton, in the November of the same year, he wrote still in much the same tone, with a shrewd perception of all the weakness of the Spaniards which his friend never reached, and with a resolute appreciation of the utter worthlessness of their leaders which it took many more years to make apparent to everybody.

"May the spirit of prophecy never forsake you, and never be less propitious to the cause of freedom! The Spaniards, it appears, have gained another victory; but as they have no prospect of a better government, I grieve perhaps more at their successes than I should at their defeat. That such exertions should be vain and fruitless, that the patriotic should pour out their blood for the traitorous, that a Bonaparte or a Bourbon, it matters not which, should erect his throne over the great charnel-house of Spain, is most lamentable and most sure. Two events leave me without the power of doubting that the prevailing party in the Junta is devoted to the French. First, their hesitation and slowness to convoke the Cortes; and secondly, the extreme absurdity which they combined with it of inviting all Spaniards to deliver their sentiments on what alterations and improvements it would be requisite to make in the government and constitution. To agitate the minds both of the wise and of the ignorant, to make every man's vanity turn out against his neighbor's, to bid people choose their representatives yet exercise their judgment by giving their votes individually, could not enter any sound head for any good purpose. The scheme was formed in the Tuileries, and is worthy of its author. See what a parcel of rascals and boobies have been appointed by the Junta to conduct their armies. Masaredo, a most excellent man and a most experienced officer, joined the French through the love of freedom and from the desire of forming for his country an efficient and firm government. Weakness and abuse he knew are often long-lived, though they come to a violent end; and he thought it less disgraceful, as perhaps some others do, to writhe for a moment under superior strength than to slumber out all his days in a sty of his own littering."



Nor less remarkable is the remainder of the letter, where Landor's discontent with the government at home which his friend was still outwardly condescending to support finds animated expression. He had become in June of this year, at Southey's request, a subscriber to Coleridge's *Friend*, in the twelfth number of which, published in the month when his letter was written, appeared a paper on vulgar errors respecting taxes and taxation, wherein Coleridge contended that though taxes might often be injurious to a country, it could never be from their amount merely, but only from the time or mode in which they were raised; and, objecting to the analogy set up between a nation indebted to itself and a tradesman under obligation to his creditors, had said a much fairer instance would be that of a husband and wife playing cards at the same table against each other, where what the one lost the other gained. Landor did not find this illustration quite satisfactory.

"Woe betide those governors whose paralyzed hand holds out unwittingly this problem to their countrymen, — whether it is better to sink under the ascendancy of exalted genius from without, however malignant be its influence, or to be so supine and idle as never to lift up their heads and use their arms against the scorpions that sting them or the spiders and cockroaches that consume them from their own window-shutters! For my own part I would buy a monkey, I would even bring one over, to devour these mischievous vile household insects. When rulers are so feeble or corrupt as to make men indifferent to their country, which never was done to so blind and precipitous a height as now, it is idle to talk of taxation. But I cannot yet consider it so tranquilly as your friend Coleridge. If my wife wins my money at cards, and she is really a prudent wife, I sustain no detriment. But if she squanders it among unworthy favorites, and bribes her servants with it to pull her neighbor's cap, I will take care in future to play less often and for a smaller stake. If taxes are at no time injuries 'from their amount merely,' it is because, when they are exorbitant, the mode of raising them must be inquisitorial or violent. May we not complain of a thing oppressive in itself, *because* there is also another thing which adds to the oppression? Certainly no lady with £150 jointure and six or eight children, who pays such taxes as she must at present do, could by any human ingenuity in imposing or collecting them be made insensible of their pressure. I remember the logical swindling of your neighbor, Bishop Watson, and the hot but honest reply of poor Gilbert Wakefield. I remember too the crucem and the diadema. I never liked either of these writers. The one would never have made me a critic, nor the other a Christian, nor have induced me to think him so. As I never drink wine, I am forced every now and then to write half a dozen verses, that I may forget what is passing round about."

But he continued to write on the things also he most wanted to forget; and these notices of his letters about Spain should not close without mention of his "Hints to a Junta," which, as he told Southey in March, 1810, he had written fiercely but improvidently. "Many of the things were useful at the moment. It is gone by: indeed I question if any bookseller would print the thing if I gave it

him ; and I never will ask for anything except for heaven and a wife." Southey's next letter was very decisive of the influence of Landor over him. The conclusion had been forced upon him, he said, that Bourbon was as bad as Bonaparte ; " Hints to a Junta " had not been thrown away on him ; and now more than ever he wished that, at the outset of the French invasion, Spaniards and Portuguese had sung *Te Deum* for the loss of their respective dynasties and united in a federal republic. It was the form of government peculiarly adapted to the Peninsula, because of the different *fueros* of the different kingdoms ; and other good must have come of it. " It might, perhaps, have prevented this country from assisting them, but they would have been better without its assistance ; and it would not impossibly have occasioned a resurrection of the Jacobins in France," — in other words, have destroyed Napoleon. That was the temper in which, so late as 1810, Southey was preparing his second batch of history for the *Edinburgh Register* ; and Landor should see that it would be composed " with a spirit that will surprise most people in these base times."

And then a misgiving crosses him as he writes these words whether the eagerness with which he was now turning to that kind of composition might not imply that history, not poetry, was his real function after all, at any rate for the days that remained to him ; only (he adds with a pleasant touch of character) a proof-sheet of *Kehama* is apt to disperse the cloud. With this letter there went to Landor the commencement of his *History of Brazil*.

His friend replied and reassured him. No poet worth the name but must at times give way to thinking that there are poets enough in the world without him ; but let him be satisfied that a greater confidence would not imply greater power. For himself he lamented every hour that Southey deducted from poetry. Those who might read *Kehama* would judge whether its writer's present love for history could arise from anything like " incipient decay " in the powers of imagination. He knew not what poem was so vivid and so varied. Whereas he could not but doubt whether the world in general cared about historical facts in the past affairs of Brazil ; nay, whether even such facts of the day passing before them excited any interest whatever. Very characteristically he proceeds : —

" It is, I begin to think, for the good of mankind that for ten or twenty years it should first sink, and afterwards smart, under a severe and oppressive tyranny. The instrument wants a good deal of playing upon. This will prove either that it is good for nothing or that it will come into tune by degrees. If I had five thousand pounds to employ people to collect papers, I would also write a history of the present reign. An insuperable idleness, and a disgust and satiety of everything, will, I am afraid, overcome all my faculties."

Nevertheless, in the same letter of April, 1810, he tells his friend that he has just been writing a letter to the popular hero Burdett, a brave



and good one ; five long hours' work, all of which he shall have to recopy. "Ah me ! this reminds me that you could not make out my Latin verses ! I wonder whether I shall be able myself to read my letter to Burdett when I see it to-morrow morning." Perhaps he was not, for all trace of that production has vanished. But the mention of the Latin verses may take us to other parts of the correspondence of the friends, in which only matters of literature were discussed between them.

## VI. ON KEHAMA AND RODERICK.

The portions of letters contained in this section will relate chiefly to the poems which, resumed at Landor's instigation, Southey carried on to their completion steadily amid his other labors ; and they shall be such as I hope may still be interesting, or in some way characteristic of either friend. There will at least be no repetition, in any of the extracts given, of what has before appeared in print.

FROM BATH, 11TH JANUARY, 1809.

"Since my return from Spain I have hardly read anything else than the *Cid* and *Kehama*. It will be long before we have such warriors as the one, and such poems as the other. I never felt the same anxiety to see the whole of any work as of this.

'Twice hast thou set thy footstep:  
Where shall the third be planted?'

If the next parcel is equal to the two former, the riches of the East will vanish from the grasp of future poets. I am not destined to be a great reader. Many hours have I passed, at different times, over these lines:—

'There Kailval stands  
And sees the billows rise above his head.  
She at the startling sight forgot the power  
The Curse had given him, and held forth her hands  
Imploringly, — her voice was on the wind,  
And the deaf ocean o'er Ladurlad closed.'

"There are some things in our language which want fixing by some convention among the higher powers. Shakespeare and Milton write tōwārd and tōwārd. But improperly: for we say invariably bäckwārd, förwārd, and we ought also to say tōwārd. I have in general given more attention to language than to anything else; but I shall always think myself wrong in 'Bent tōwārd them,' &c., at the end of a book in *Gebir*. We possess a high advantage in the double termination of the third person singular, — *es* and *eth*. The former should never precede an *s*, nor the latter a *th*. To this rule I would adhere both in poetry and prose. I hear no more of Mr. Coleridge's new project." [The *Friend*: of which the first number did not appear till June.] "Indeed I converse with no literary men here, nor do I know for certain whether there are any."

AN OBJECTION, FEBRUARY, 1809.

"When I can read what you send of *Kehama* more calmly and dispassionately, which I would hardly wish to do, I will search it through and

through to discover the slightest of its imperfections. None of your enemies shall be more zealous in the labor. One line not only displeased but disturbed me,

‘Eye hath not seen nor painter’s hand portrayed.’

I have an insuperable hatred to such words as ‘painter’ and ‘portray’ in grave heroic poetry: add to which, if ‘eye hath not seen,’ it is superfluous to say the rest. The first words are serious and solemn, — the last put one in mind of the Exhibition and the French. Take care how you ‘o’erlay this poem with ornament!’ It is now *suis pollens opibus*, as Lucretius says of the Gods. I know not whether we shall find any one in any language so full of originality and fancy. You will find fewer things to embellish than to correct, and very few of these. Remember that I am to have something to console me for not being able to write it. I am to be the typographer.”

#### SOUTHEY’S REPLY.

“Your draft was put in circulation. *Kehama* would never have been resumed had it not been for you. It had lain untouched for five years, and so it would have remained. You stung me to the resolution of going on; and I am not sure whether the main pleasure which I have felt in proceeding has not been the anticipation of addressing it to you and saying so. It is announced through the customary channel of magazines as in considerable forwardness. I am going to Edinburgh in May, and for a week or ten days shall be Walter Scott’s guest. *Kehama* will then (God willing) be completed: and I think Scott will enable me to ascertain in what manner it may most advantageously be published. . . . It has however cost me no expense of time. I have fairly won it, as Lincolnshire speculators win estates from the sea; — my daily work has been done just as if no such composition was in my thoughts, without the slightest interruption. If therefore nothing be got by its sale, it has not made me the poorer. I am so much the happier for having written it, so much the richer as a poet, and in fact have received from you half as much as the profits of an edition would be when shared by a publisher. Its success (I speak solely of its *market* success) will only thus far influence me, that a good sale would make me afford more time for other such poems, which I should then publish as fast as they were written. Its still-birth (which I entirely expect) will merely make me write others as this is written, in the early morning hours; which I shall continue to do as long as the unabated power is in me, and leave them behind as post-obits to my children, in perfect confidence that such manuscripts will prove good and secure property hereafter. At Edinburgh I shall feel my way about the publication. When the obnoxious line was written, I thought of better painters than the exhibitioners, — of those whose creative powers entitle them to be mentioned anywhere. It is however an ugly word, because it always reminds one of the house-painter. I set a black mark upon the line. Your remarks shall be well weighed, and every passage which I cannot entirely justify shall be altered. Do not however be at the trouble of criticising the first portion which you received, for that has been greatly altered since by rhyming most of those parts which were rhymeless, — a task which is yet to be completed.”

Landor’s former objection to the rhymeless metres had led to this concession from his friend; and speaking of it in his next letter he



says that, apart from his admiration of the higher beauties of the poem, the facility displayed in the new rhymes had taken him greatly by surprise. "It never was equalled. New rhymes in general seem strange; and nine people out of ten, scholars I mean and literatists, imagine them forced, not chosen. No weakness or absurdity is half so much scoffed and scouted as a new or unusual rhyme." From the same letter we learn that he had been lately

#### READING EURIPIDES.

"I believe I shall remain at Bath a good while longer. I am reading what I had not read before of Euripides. Between ourselves, in most of his tragedies there is more preachment than poetry. I was surprised and mortified to find it so. How, in the name of Heaven, could the Athenians endure on the stage, so deplorably mutilated and metamorphosed, those heroes whom they had followed in the vigor of unsophisticated life through the wide and ever-varying regions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssea*? A hero, penned up and purgatorized in this middle state, is fitted to become a Monseigneur bien poudré among the mesdames and waiting-maids, and patch-boxes of Racine. I have been reading also Twining's translation, notes, &c. of Aristotle's *Poetics*. I attempted the original once. It appeared to me, what I suppose it is not, tautological though concise. I found it too hard for me. At that time my teeth were better, though my digestion not so good. I could reach the construction, but I could not analyze the parts."

Very characteristic was Southey's next letter, in which he described *Kehama* as approaching completion so rapidly that already his thoughts were busy with what its successor should be. Two more sections only, he said, would finish what he had in hand; and he was eager for Landor's advice as to the metre most advisable for his next poem, which should certainly be on the founder of the Spanish monarchy, Pelayo. He could not but feel the force of views formerly expressed to him by Landor, that what in itself was excellent would be best in blank verse, but that everything below excellence would borrow something from rhyme. As to the publication of *Kehama*, Scott had failed as yet to make the hoped-for arrangement.

"His bookseller, Ballantyne, was here lately, and his advice to me was to sell the copyright of whatever I wrote, because, he said, booksellers repaid themselves by selling off shares of the copyright. More persons were thus interested in the success of the book, and consequently greater efforts were made to sell it. This may be true, but it is a truth which is not applicable to my case; for it is utterly impossible that this poem should become popular now. The copyright, therefore, is worth little or nothing at present; and yet if it be as good as I believe it to be, there will come a time when it will have its reward. The better way, I think, will be to print it as a pocket volume, and let it take its chance. Two hundred pages will hold the poem, and about a hundred and fifty more the notes."

A little delay is still interposed; improvements have to be made in the metre, and lines to be altered or added here and there; but at

last, on the 26th November, 1809, he is able to announce to Landor that on the preceding day he had finished *Kehama*. He did not expect that it would meet with more admirers than *Gebir*, but should be thoroughly satisfied if they whom it did meet with admired it as much. His work being done, he is full of fears for it. There was too little beauty, he doubted, and too little human interest; and perhaps all the feeling it could be expected to awaken would be wonder at the strangeness of the tale and the monstrosity of the fiction. He can only comfort himself by looking forward, and resolving that *Pelayo* shall be begun as soon as his plan is sufficiently matured. Four days later Landor thus replied:—

“Hardly could I assure myself that I was speaking with sincerity if I congratulated you on the completion of *Kehama*, on abandoning those scenes and images which must have given such exquisite and enchanting pleasure as they were rising and passing in your mind. You are right in beginning another poem while the heart is warm with poetry. *Pelayo* and *Richard the First* are the two finest subjects in the world. I thought of *Sertorius* once; but, I know not how, it appears to me that nothing romantic or poetical can coexist with what is Roman. These two unfortunate words stand up, backing one another against me and accusing me of a quibble. I meant simply to say that the Romans were a blunt flat people, and that even a Roman name breaks the spell of poetry on plain historical ground. Spain is even yet a sort of faeryland, and we are yet not too familiar with the faces of Goths and Moors. You possess here peculiar advantages. No other man in Europe has had so minute an insight of their history and character.

“I perceive in many of the verses in *Kehama* a particular ring of rhyme, — a recurrence not marking, nor waiting for, the termination: such as we find in Italian:—

‘Ma sento che adesso  
L’istesso non è.’

Nor indeed is it always in the same place. In some instances it has not gratified my ear, coming upon it when it was unprepared. If the poem could be translated into any Oriental language, what a happy effect it might produce! It would show them that puny conceits and weak extravagance are no requisites in poetry, and that wildness of imagery is not inconsistent with truth and simplicity of expression. I have read everything Oriental I could lay my hands on, and everything good may be comprised in thirty or forty lines. There is a prodigious deal of puckering and flouncing and spangles, but nothing fresh, nothing graceful, nothing standing straight upwards or moving straight forwards on its feet. I would rather have written the worst page in the *Odyssey* than all the stuff Sir William Jones makes such a pother and palaver on; yet what volumes would it fill! what libraries would it suffocate! God forbid that I should ever be drowned in any of these butts of malmsey! It is better to describe a girl getting a tumble over a skipping-rope made of a wreath of flowers.”

The rest of the letter, dated 30th November, 1809, was filled with a Latin idyl. Like Sir Roger de Coverley, Landor had been reading at the end of a dictionary, not like him an account of Hector, but the story of Callirhoe, who spurned the love of Coresus, priest of Bacchus.



whereupon he swore and prayed to his god, who visited her people with pestilence. In their affliction they betook themselves to Dodona, when Jupiter announced that only the death of Callirhoe or some one in her stead could remove the curse, and Coresus was appointed to fulfil the command of Jove. But when Callirhoe stood before him at the altar, his revenge paled before his love and pity, and he drove the knife into his own bosom. Landor had written this pretty and pathetic story in excellent Latin hexameters,\* close and dramatic, and now sent the first sixty-eight to his friend, sending the remaining sixty-two in a second letter after some weeks' interval, during which Southey had been silent.

"I have been happy in the idea that you are employed in something interesting to yourself and the age and other selves and other ages, else I should have complained a little that I have not heard from you so very long a time. I remember that I transcribed some Latin verses in my last, but cannot find where I left off! Whether these are good or bad or indifferent, they are better than anything I can write on the spur of the occasion, for these are spurs that always catch my great-coat in getting on. When I have done writing I shall find a thousand things I ought to have written about."

Southey, alas! had a good reason for not acknowledging the Latin idyl: he had not been able to decipher it, and very frankly doth confess so much. He had also been hoping to send Landor the first sections of *Pelayo*. His letter is dated March, 1810.

"It is very long since you have heard from me, and for a twofold reason: first, because your verses tantalized me as a barrel of oysters would have done if set before me without a knife. I could not read them. There is little difficulty in understanding the worst possible handwriting in our own every-day language; though I once saw two parcels which had travelled all over England, and at last found their way by the lucky guess of some post-office clerk, who wrote on them 'Try Durham': they had tried Dublin previously. But when a foresight of the meaning is necessary to make out the words, anything not easy in itself becomes very difficult. If I could have read these verses, I should have understood them; because I did not understand, I could not read them. The case, however, is not desperate: in some season of leisure I purpose transcribing them, and shall thus make them out step by step.

"The other reason was that I might send you the first section of *Pelayo*, and this I have been prevented from completing because my hours for poetry have been partly employed in correcting *Kehama*, partly diverted to the pressing business of the *Edinburgh Register*. *Kehama* is half printed, and the remaining half still requires correction. I want to get rid of the snake in the water-chambers, which is neither well conceived nor well written; and something is wanting at the conclusion. It will probably be published in June. I have made my usual bargain with the booksellers,—that is to say, no bargain at all: they print, and I share the profits. Scott recommended strongly the quarto form, and quarto accordingly it is; my own opinion being that in whatever form it appeared a sale to clear the expense was certain, and anything beyond that exceedingly improbable."

\* It is the seventh of the *Idylla Heroica* in *Poemata et Inscriptiones* (1847), and a translation by himself is in the *Hellenics* (1859), pp. 57-63.

*Pelayo*, which took afterwards the name of *Roderick*, in whom its interest finally centred as the hero, went to Landor regularly as its predecessor, section by section, when once he had despatched the first. But still this was delayed, and with it the appearance of *Kehama*, Southey's doubts and misgivings suspending some of the sheets at press. In July, 1810, however, he promises the published poem in six weeks, saying that he thought it in structure, now he surveyed it as a whole, far superior to *Thalaba*; and though in most other respects he was afraid he did not himself like it quite so well, he held it to be a work *sui generis*. Like *Gebir*, it would find its own admirers, and Landor's preface on that point he had always sincerely echoed. Then in September he announced that the last proof had been corrected, that there will be yet a further delay of another six weeks, and that it was dedicated to his friend, but for whom it would never have been finished. To this (writing from Bath in October) Landor says he cannot hope from *Kehama* more pleasure than he has already derived from it, whatever new ornaments his friend may have added, and however exalted his own head may be by the chaplets and roses placed upon it. Nevertheless, as late as November he has again to ask: "Where is *Kehama*?" To which Southey replies: "Heaven knows what has become of *Kehama*. I look, and have for weeks and months daily been looking, for the advertisement. Longman has your Pulteney Street direction to send it by whenever it does appear, and I hope it will reach you before this." He adds that he thought to have accompanied it with an epistle to Landor in blank verse; but that this remained still on the anvil. Indeed, it was never finished, a simple prose dedication taking its place.

In the same letter (17th December, 1810) he asks Landor for his Latin *Alcaics*, his friend having told him that he had written some to the ex-king of Sweden, the deposed Gustavus, and ordered a very few to be printed. He is also to send him his *Simonidea*, if he can by any influence command a copy, having himself in vain endeavored to obtain one from London. That was another of Landor's hasty, impetuous, private publications, containing some charming Latin verse and several English pieces to Ioné and Ianthe.\*

\* Landor's reply described it. "There are many things of which I am ashamed in the *Simonidea*. I printed whatever was marked with a pencil by a woman who loved me, and I consulted all her caprices. There is a sneer, of which I am heartily ashamed, at Mr. Grant, Mr. Heber, and Lord Strangford. But is it not a cursed galling thing to hear a woman (who is soul and senses to one) tell me to write like these? She had read no better and few other poets. I added some Latin poetry of my own, more pure in its Latinity than in its sentiment. But the *Pudoris Ara* is incomparably the best poetry I have been able to write. Adieu; and when you read the *Simonidea*, pity and forgive me." Whether Southey received it does not clearly appear. He makes no mention of it. But it most probably reached him, as he acknowledges the *Ode to Gustavus* which had been sent along with it from the printing-press of Valpy, asking him what was the meaning of the monogram in its title-page, and saying he never read his Latin without wishing it were English, and regretting that he was ever taught a language so much inferior to his own. To this Landor replied in his following letter (February 5, 1811): "You inquire what is the meaning of the monogram. I looked at it. Surely it is a digamma; a puerile sort of practical pun, invented by Valpy no doubt.



"Thanks, a thousand and a thousand," replying to that December letter Landor sends him for *Kehama*, which had arrived at last. "How am I delighted that the man, whom above all others I would wish to know me thoroughly, sees through me! The inscription is most suitable to my taste; and if I may think of myself somewhat magnificently, which I was never disinclined to do, most honorable to yours." In the following month, writing still from Bath, he says Ch. Burney had borrowed the book of him, and admired it not less enthusiastically than himself. He describes himself at the time, however, as out of humor with everything *but* Southey and his poem, and proceeds to show it by a remark on the notes:—

"One thing I confess to you fills me with astonishment: how you can write such poetry and admire, when to endure would be immeasurably too much, the flimsy and fantastic Spenser. Milton did too; but our language in his time had little good in it, except a few contracted passages, beside the works of Shakespeare. Chaucer is much better than any of the rest,—a passably good novelist, but hardly to be called a poet."

These heresies he abated greatly afterwards, but never quite got rid of. His ill-humor at the politics of the day and the kind of government England then had, vented in the same letter, underwent little subsequent abatement or change:—

"If Bonaparte were not the worst and most execrable of human beings, sure people would hardly lift a hand up to save these rascals who are dividing our property. It is better to yield to force only than to have one's ribs bent together between force and fraud."

Upon these various points Southey has in turn, of course, something to say. As to *Kehama*, which Scott is going to review for next *Quarterly*, he is glad of Burney's good opinion, as one which has weight in the world. Him he had met only once; but he had a familiar acquaintance with his brother the captain, meeting him at Rickman's, where they and their host and Charles Lamb would make bad puns the whole night through. Notwithstanding *Pelayo*, another poem is already working in his brain, with a son of Goffe the regicide for its hero; and he has been writing for the coming *Quarterly* on Captain Pasley's book, which he would fain make "our political bible."\* Landor's heresy about Spenser, however, he cannot over-

It serves as an initial instead of v. Grammarians tell us that it was pronounced so. I fancy they lie. Certain it is the Romans substituted the v when they assumed some words to which the digamma was affixed or inherent,—vinum, sylva, &c. The Greeks, I imagine, pronounced it as a double u. B seems in many countries to serve occasionally as v,—Viscaia, &c. The modern Greeks read πολυφλοισνοιο for πολυφλοισβοιο, giving the diphthongs as faint a sound almost as the French do."

\* A letter from Walter Birch was received just at this time, which, for its acknowledgment of the Latin Odes by Landor (to Gustavus of Sweden, &c.), now sent forth anonymously, for other points it touches on, and for its agreement with Southey as to Pasley's book, may be read with interest. "Dear Landor, thank you for your elegant Latin Odes, of which I did not know you to be the author till this morning. I send you in return some verses which I wrote for the Examiner at Oxford, which will show how far I agree with you. Their tone was not quite coincident with the

look. Inferior he admits him to be to Chaucer, who for variety of power had no competitor but Shakespeare; but of English versification he is incomparably the greatest master in the language. As for our having had little poetry before Milton, Southey thinks rather that there had been little since. What there was in the earlier time, at any rate, was sterling sense in sterling English, with thought and feeling in it; whereas now the surest way to become popular was to have as little of either ingredient as possible. "Campbell's success is a notable example."\*

Landor shows some kind of fight for his heresies, notwithstanding. But first he declares his amazement at the new poem his friend is planning ("the War of the New-Englanders, the principal character a Quaker"! ) as what no other man alive would be bold enough to undertake. And how in any case will he ever manage to write two poems at one and the same time?

"To dictate to half a dozen secretaries, in as many languages, is a trick; but to do it at once is a difficult one. How you can write two poems at a time I cannot conceive. I could write history and poetry, but I could not divide my passions and affections. When I write a poem my heart and all my feelings are upon it. I never commit adultery with another; and high poems will not admit flirtation.

"I should like to talk about Spenser with you, and to have the *Faery Queen* before us. Passion can alone give the higher beauties of versification. Shakespeare, who excels all mortals in poetry, excels them all in verse frequently; but I am convinced he formed erroneous opinions on the subject, and that he preferred a stiff and strutting step systematically, and was great only when he was carried off his legs in spite of himself. In my opinion there is more transcendent poetry in Shakespeare than in all the other poets that have existed since the creation of the world, and more passages filled with harmony from its inspiration. Immeasurably as I prefer Chaucer to Spenser, I cannot as a poet, — a great one is here understood, — because he never comes up to the ideal so well expressed by Horace: '*meum qui pectus inaniter angit*,' &c. The language of Chaucer is the language of his time; but Spenser's is a jargon. No, I do not think we had little good poetry before Milton. Some truly pure grains of gold were carried down by the streamlets in rude old times, ill exchanged for the tinsel which we are just removing from ours. The English nation was in all respects at its highest pitch of glory in the times of Shakespeare and Hooker. Chivalry had forgotten all the follies of its youth: it retained its spirit, and had lost only its austerity. The Tudors, those blackguard and

desponding spirit attributed to some of Lord Grenville's party, or I did not mean that it should be so. I have lately been reading with high interest a publication entitled *An Essay on the Military Policy and Institutions of the British Empire*, by Captain Pasley, R. E. It appears to me to be a noble work, and calculated to be more useful than any political publication I have seen since the days of Burke. I have also been much interested in Sir R. Wilson's book, notwithstanding some little ambition of style and other defects of no great consequence; but for which the *Edinburgh Review* will, I have no doubt, give him a trimming. By the by, did you read Coplestone's second reply to the *Edinburgh Reviewers*? I really never saw a more decisive and triumphant piece of controversy. I have not yet seen Southey's poem, but hope to do so before long. Believe me, dear Landor, yours very affectionately,  
W. BIRCH."

\* Omitted in the imperfect copy printed in the *Life*, III. 295.



beastly Welsh, had never infected the mass of English mind. People read; and to our national manliness a little was now added of Roman dignity. I am going on as if I had nothing else to do or say."

Leaving unnoticed the close of this letter, Southey replied upon its opening remark, that his ability to think of two poems at once proceeded from weakness, not from strength. The continuous excitement Landor had lately gone through in the composition of a tragedy, he could not stand: in him it would not work itself off, as with Landor, in tears; the tears would flow while in the act of composition, and they would leave behind a throbbing head and a whole system in the highest state of nervous excitability, which would soon induce the most fearful form of disease. This was a dream that always haunted Southey. Not, alas, wholly without reason, as afterwards appeared.

The tragedy referred to had been written in the interval covered by these letters, and will be the subject of the next section. To this will now only be added such fresh allusions to *Pelayo* in its progress as may be read independently, and other matters incidentally arising that have in them some personal interest.

One of Southey's letters in 1810 told Landor a melancholy story of a young Bristol poet who had died at nineteen, cherishing to the last a hope that his poems, printed after his death, might save a sister from destitution. They had been sent to Southey.

"Thirty years ago they would have been thought wonderful, — neither you nor I wrote better at nineteen, perhaps not so well, — but what can be produced at nineteen except promises of after-excellence, which serve only to give one the heart-ache when the blossom has been cut off? I do not know the family; but I am exerting myself earnestly to make this poor bequest productive."

To which Landor answered: —

"I grieved at your account of poor William Roberts; and the more as among all my friends I hardly know one on whom I can reckon as a subscriber for his poems. Plenty of people will say *poor fellow!* and moralize and sentimentalize. It is better to go to the devil than hear or hazard their hypocrisy. Pray write again, and tell me how I can forward two or three guineas to his friends without wounding their tenderness or their pride. It may be long before the work is printed; and, if they wait for twelve hundred subscribers, never. I went to Bristol the morning I received your letter, and am ashamed to say did nothing. I want dexterity, and never did anything right except in moments of great danger. Then instinct prevails."

In one of the letters immediately following he is still talking of the poem of which Southey has sent him the dedication: —

"My feelings are hardly more gratified by the marks of kindness and distinction you confer on me than by the exalted pleasure I receive from the perfection of the work. . . . I like to talk of myself to you, though no earthly being is so universally silent as I am on his hopes and fears and

speculations. I confess to you, if even foolish men had read *Gebir*, I should have continued to write poetry; — there is something of summer in the hum of insects. I like either to win or to extort an acknowledgment of my superiority from all who owe it. No others owe this so sincerely and indisputably as those who write against me. I am informed two or three people have done it. Of these I have only seen one, and he calls me by names which Mr. Pitt would have said, or might have said, are quite *irrelevant*. I forget whether cuckold or pirate, but something I am sure as little concerned with poetry."

Southey promptly replied with genuine sympathy and wise advice. He spoke of what had prevented *Gebir* from being read by the foolish. No doubt it was too good for them, but it was also too hard. Of course they could not understand it, but they did not find meaning enough upon its surface to make them even fancy they understood it. Why should he not display the same powers upon a happier subject, and write a poem as good and more intelligible? Yet very certain was it after all that *Gebir* had really excited more attention than its author seemed to be aware of. For instance, two manifest imitations had appeared, — Rough's play, and the first part of Sotheby's *Saul*. To which Southey added all about his own review of it in the *Critical*, and what a laugh he had had in connection with it at Gifford, the editor of the new *Review* of which the first numbers were lately out: —

"When Gifford published his *Juvenal*, one of the most base attacks that ever disgraced a literary journal was made upon it in the *Critical Review*, by some one of the heroes of his Baviad. Gifford, who gives way to all sorts of violence in his writings,\* wrote a desperate reply, in which he brought forward all the offences of the *Review* for many years back, and one of those offences was its praise of *Gebir*!"

At last, in July, 1810, Southey sent to Landor, in six closely written folio columns, the first section of *Roderick*, or as he continues for some time to call it, *Pelayo*. The subject at the outset intralls him, and he has a second sight of what its course and treatment is to be, with which he is more than satisfied. The received legend of Roderick's escape from the battle-field and dying in penitence at Visen is that which he means to follow; discarding his alleged abode at Nazareth, and other stories out of the miracle-shops; and what effect he means at the last to produce by bringing together him and Florinda and Count Julian, his friend shall see. Nor shall this be his only achievement. Landor has laughed him a little out of his Quaker hero; but his brain seethes and teems with other subjects. He has visions of a poem built on the *Zendavesta*, wherein the evil powers should be leagued against a son of the great king, and, by every new

\* In the imperfect copy of this letter in the *Life* (III. 228 - 231) these words and the "desperate" reply are altogether omitted. One of the other omissions at the close of the letter is touching, and worthy to be kept: "God knows I do not begin to be weary of the sun, and yet the wish which I most frequently express is, that the century were over, and that I and mine had all reached our haven of eternal rest."



calamity inflicted upon him, should evolve in him some virtue which his rank had stifled, till it would end in his abandoning Persia in company with a Greek slave, the philosopher of the story, and becoming a citizen of Athens. And something of this and other projects \* he now tells his friend that he may wind up with an adjuration to him, with his full leisure and abundant power, to do likewise, and thus leave behind him what distant generations would take delight in, — other *Gebirs* with happier fables.

Landor's reply took Southey somewhat by surprise, for it announced that he had at intervals been writing other things beside Latin Idyls and *Alcaics*, *Hints to Juntas*, *Simonideas*, and *Letters to Burdett*, and that among them was a tragedy with Count Julian for its hero ! What other feeling also arose to Southey as portions of the tragedy were sent to him, we shall shortly see ; but when, after a few months, all was completed and before him, he could not but survey with some despondency his own *Pelayo*. He talked of compressing some parts of it, and said it was well that their conceptions of all the historical personages were so entirely unlike, as he should inevitably have been deterred from proceeding. With eager and frank reassurance Landor replied. In the portions just sent to him he perceived the same strain of high impassioned sentiment, proper and peculiar to the character on which it was to act. The poem would be different from Southey's former efforts in a greater degree than any two epic poems known to him, however remote their ages.

"I do not see what you can compress in this part of *Pelayo*. If you take away too many leaves you starve the blossoms. There is a light luxuriant arborescence, which shows the vigor of the roots and stem, and answers for the richness of the fruit. As I live, I have written three verses! made so by a stroke of the pen." †

Nor was this a loftier strain of eulogy than the subject of it fairly challenged. Some of the noblest parts of *Roderick* are remarked on here : —

"I have read, and I know not when I shall cease reading, the incomparable description of Roderick's wanderings and agony. What are those of *Æneas* or *Ulysses* in comparison ? The story of *Adosinda* is heart-rending. When I have looked long enough at the figures of great painters, I dwell on the landscape. It is only the great ones who make it strikingly peculiar and appropriate. We wish for more, yet are conscious that we ought

\* One of these I extract in greater detail from another of Southey's unpublished letters. It was a poem that he felt would be more difficult of execution than *Kehama*, if he should ever feel at leisure to execute it. It was to paint such a future state as should be consistent with the reason and hopes of the wisest and best men. "An earthly story must be chosen, in order to have the interest of earthly passions; but the point of view should be from the next stage of existence. Perhaps this is not very intelligible. Such as it is, however, it is the seed from which I am confident a fine tree might arise."

† "There is a light luxuriant arborescence  
Which shows the vigor of the roots and stem,  
And answers for the richness of the fruit."

not to wish it. In the beginning of the sheet, the scene of the pine forest is a perfect example of what I mean. I hope you will meet with no more interruptions.\* I am fortunate; for I never compose a single verse within doors, except in bed sometimes. I do not know what the satirists would say if they knew that most of my verses spring from a gate-post or a mole-hill. Many hundreds, as good at least as any I have written, I have foreborne to write for want of a pencil or a dry seat."

The letter from Southey which accompanied the sixth book of *Pelayo* is a comment on the most critical part of this masterly poem, and on the reasons that led to the form it finally assumed, too curious and interesting to be lost:—

"I know nothing like this book in poetry; but there is something like it in romance. *Gyron le Courtoys*, a book which has some of the best and some of the worst things of chivalrous romance, has something which is so far like it that great part of the hero's former history is related to himself. It has a very good effect there, though there is no passion connected with it; and I was led to this mode of back narrative by the natural and necessary course of my own story, not by imitation. Least of all things am I an imitator; though you will see that I have borrowed something from *Count Julian*.

"The next book is nearly finished. I believe I must go back to the fifth, and interpolate a passage introductory of Egilona, whose death I think of bringing forward in Book VIII., and in whose character I must seek for such a palliation of the rape of Florinda as may make Roderick's crime not so absolutely incompatible with his heroic qualities as it now appears. The truth is that in consequence of having begun the story with Roderick, I have imperceptibly been led to make him the prominent personage of the poem, and have given him virtues which it will be very difficult to make consistent with his fall. . . .

"I shall soon have two more books to send you, when I have fitted in two passages which must be interpolated in the earlier part of the poem. The way is opening before me; and now the further I get, the more rapidly I shall proceed, for the sake of getting to the conclusion, which will be full of fine things. The Spaniards will never forgive me for making their Virgin Mary at Covadonga into Adosinda, and performing the miracle by human means."

Acknowledging this in November, 1812, Landor writes:—

"I have now received two detachments of *Pelayo* since I wrote, which proves that one sits much more quiet and idle under pleasurable sensations than even under those which are indifferent. In the mean time I have written a score silly things to a score silly people. . . . The more I read of *Pelayo*, the more arduous the undertaking seems to me; but at the same time the strength with which it is carried on increases. People have formed their opinions of heroic poetry from Homer and his successors.

\* Referring to what Southey had written on the 10th October, giving an amusing picture of how he wrote his epics: "You would have had a book of *Pelayo* ere this, had not Gooch very unconsciously prevented me. He happens like myself to rise about seven, and found his way into my library as early as I did. Now poetry is the only thing which I cannot compose if any person be present; because voice, gestures, and eyes require a freedom which the sense of any human presence would restrain. What has been written since my return, if it be not good, deceives me grievously; for I never produced anything under the influence of deeper feeling."



All who have followed Homer have failed deplorably. Virgil is great only where he has not followed him. You will not persuade any one that anything is heroic without kicks and cuffs. All can enter into the spirit of a battle, and perhaps the timid man likes it most of all from a consciousness of security; there are very few who will feel at heart what Pelayo feels, and fewer still who will follow up with intensity all the vicissitudes of Roderigo. How many, how nearly all, of our poets and critics will read these concluding lines as if they were common ones!

‘Roderick alone appeared  
Unmoved and calm; for now the royal Goth  
Had offered his accepted sacrifice,  
And therefore in his soul he felt that peace  
Which follows painful duty well performed —  
Perfect and heavenly peace — the peace of God.’

The language is so plain and the sentiment so natural, that I am the only man in England who knows the full value of them. You yourself would only find it out in the writings of another.”

A verbal criticism may be worth preserving : —

“In one place you have written *forsook* as the participle. Now I am very jealous of the participles. I would not write ‘it was held,’ but ‘it was holden’; although custom authorizes both, and rather (in late years) has preferred the former. I wish to see our language perfect in your works; it is very far from perfect in any other of our poets.”

To which Southey : —

“Your remark about the participles is right; and when I have written incorrectly, it has been [in] virtue of a privilege which, in spite of all precedent, is best honored in the disuse.”

Nor should a pleasant note be lost on the introduction of Roderick’s dog (which Southey, by the way, did not improve by substituting Theron for Whitefoot in the poem as printed) : —

“Resting his head upon his master’s knees,  
Upon the bank beside him Whitefoot lay,” &c.

“Though the dogs,” said Landor, “are the best people among us, the fastidiousness of poetry rejects their names. Homer has given none to the dog of Ulysses, though Ovid has signalized every cur that devoured Actæon.”

His last letter on Southey’s manuscript from which I shall quote for the present has a touch of personal significance.

“Certainly this last section of *Pelayo* is the most masterly of all. I could not foresee or imagine how the characters would unfold themselves. I could have done but little with Florinda and with Egilona, taking your outline; yet I could have done a good deal more with them than any other man except yourself. For I delight in the minute variations and almost imperceptible shades of the female character, and confess that my reveries, from my most early youth, were almost entirely on what this one or that one would have said or done in this or that situation. Their countenances, their movements, their forms, the colors of their dresses, were before my eyes.

"One reason why we admire the tragedies of the ancients is this, we never have had our images broken by the iconoclast effort of the actors. Within my memory we never have had any worthy of the name; but I feel convinced that Garrick himself, who was probably the greatest that ever lived, would not have recompensed me for the overthrow and ruin of my *Lear*."

A kind of practical comment on this will now be laid before the reader in letters written during the composition of *Count Julian*, and the weakness as well as the strength which Landor carried to the enterprise of writing a tragedy will be seen. That the natural bent of his genius went strongly in the direction of the drama, as he seems himself at all times to have felt with greater or less vividness, there is no doubt. The old Greek had not a more unquestionable power than his of giving objective shape to the most subtle and the most ethereal fancies, and this in itself involves a very intense element of the drama. Where any marvel occurs in *Gebir*, there is no doubt about it; it is actually there, and to be seen. Transfer this to the drama, assume that a passion is to be represented, and by the same power there it is; not mere language describing it, but the thing itself, and language only as the effluence or outbreak of the thing. In the abstract there cannot be a higher form of the dramatic than this, and it holds to a large extent even in what may be called the concrete, the details of the scene. Because, no doubt, at a play it is from other arts than the poet's that what is mainly material should reach us. Strictly speaking the poet might claim to be entirely discharged from any part of the office of setting forth, before an audience of spectators, what already is or ought to be visible to them. But unassailable as this is in theory, in practice it is not found to be possible, and all kinds of descriptive and other indulgences have to be brought in aid of the purely dramatic. The result expresses just the concession or compromise which the stage requires from the drama, which Shakespeare understood as he understood everything, and which even such writers as Landor and Lamb comprehend imperfectly, when they object to the stage presentation of *Lear*. *Lear* was written to be played; and its author, we may safely affirm, would rather have seen it acted, however wretchedly, in a barn, than heard it read to perfection in a palace. Landor tells us in this letter that he delights in "the minute variations and almost imperceptible shades" of character, and that he has "countenances, movements, forms, the very colors of dresses," before his eyes as he writes. Doubtless it was so. No one conceives a character more vividly, or puts it more expressively in action. Each has a distinguishing mark and a specialty of utterance, the look that none else should give, the language that none other so appropriately could use. He described it himself on another occasion in saying to Southey that he could never publish a poem that contained any character of a human being until he had lived two or three years with that character, and that he left off *Count Julian* and his daughter twice because each had said things



which other personages might say. But though all this may seem to raise a perfect ideal, the practicable is another thing. Too little is left for the art of the actor, and too much for the imagination of the audience. We may get at the most magnificent results too quickly, when all the little intermediate steps have been overlooked. It may indeed be the smallest part of genius that is thus wanting to complete upon the stage its highest manifestations, but the fact admits of no dispute that to the highest without it the stage is inaccessible. An example is about to be afforded than which there have been few nobler, that no given number of scenes, each of the first order of dramatic genius, will constitute a play. Let the characters, as here, be all marked and all in position; let the passions be at their highest, and always at work; let the situations even be the best; but unless there is also obtainable from the story an interest of quite another kind than that which, by creative rather than merely appreciative power, the audience must elicit for themselves, there will be no tragedy in the true sense of the word. There will only be a succession of dialogues. In all the various "scenes," however, and in all the "conversations," through which, from the beginning to the close of his life, and under every "imaginary" form, Landor's genius has most delighted to express itself, none have higher claims to admiration, or will better reward faithful study, than those of *Count Julian*.

## VII. THE TRAGEDY OF COUNT JULIAN.

The period of the tragedy is supposed to be that which immediately preceded the final defeat and mysterious fate of the last of the Gothic kings of Spain, when his most powerful noble Count Julian, whose daughter he had by violence dishonored, to avenge that wrong brought back into his native land the Moorish hosts whom he had just gloriously driven out, overthrew the monarchy, and delivered over his country to the infidel. A more tragical conception nowhere exists. In its isolated grandeur indeed it is rather epical than tragic; and there is a fine passage in one of Mr. De Quincey's essays where he speaks of the tortures inflicted in old Rome, in the sight of shuddering armies, upon a general who had committed treason to his country, as not comparable to Landor's fancy of the unseen tortures in Count Julian's mind; "who — whether his treason prospered or not; whether his dear outraged daughter lived or died; whether his king were trampled in the dust by the horses of infidels, or escaped as a wreck from the fiery struggle; whether his dear native Spain fell for ages under misbelieving hounds, or, combining her strength, tossed off *them*, but then also *himself*, with equal loathing from her shores — saw, as he looked out into the mighty darkness, and stretched out his penitential hands vainly for pity or pardon, nothing but the blackness of ruin, and ruin that was to career through centuries."

The characters grouped around this central figure have each an individuality strongly marked, but all subserve to a common purpose. From every point they draw Julian only closer and closer within the meshes of misery which love for his daughter had woven round him first, and in which all his other virtues since have but the more despairingly involved him. It is the old story of crime propagating crime ; of evil failing ever to expiate evil ; and of blind necessity, out of one fatal wrong, reproducing wrong in endless forms of retaliatory guilt and suffering.

The tragedy opens at the moment when, though the extent of his successes over his countrymen has alarmed Julian, nothing is yet decisive, and there seems still a chance for the old monarchy. The outrage had been done upon his daughter Covilla, in the absence of her betrothed Sisabert, who, upon his return in ignorance of what had passed, finding her separated from him and her father in arms against Spain, believes Julian to be simply aspiring to the throne, and for a time joins Roderigo against him. The gleam of success emboldens the hard-pressed king to attempt conciliation. Imploring Julian to wipe out his treason against Spain by a second treason against his Moorish confederates, he proposes to divorce his wife Egilona, himself to marry the wronged Covilla, and to divide with the father his daughter's throne. Julian rejects these overtures with scorn ; but Muza, the cruel and arrogant Moorish chief, suspects him to have yielded, and Roderigo's wife, believing her divorce to be resolved on, accepts the love of Abdalazis, Muza's more generous son. This is the position at the opening of the third act, when Sisabert's discovery of the truth as to his betrothed joins again his arms to those of Julian, who accomplishes the triumph of the Moor. Roderigo is now at Julian's feet, and is spurned by him ; but Spain is in the hands of the Infidel, who continues to watch with distrust the victorious renegade, and believes he will yet prove traitor again. Julian meanwhile has been found by Roderigo inaccessible to mercy. The conqueror permits him to live only that life may become to him a burden ; and while the fallen king still piteously pleads to be permitted to atone his wrong, the terrible sentence is pronounced which separates eternally the wrongdoer and his victim, sending Covilla to the convent's peace and Roderigo to the penance of the felon. Ignorant of what has really passed, however, even the most generous of the Moors drops away from Julian when he hears that the defeated king has been suffered to escape with life ; and Egilona, blinded by her jealousy and love, and who has witnessed the departure at the same time from the camp of both Roderigo and Covilla, denounces Julian to the Moorish commander as having yet the purpose to continue the throne of the Goths to his daughter and her betrayer. Throughout every scene, whatever else its ebb or flow of passion, Julian has to bear the brunt of suffering and sorrow. High above the rest still towers that shape of solitary pain, to which all converge, whether in



love or hate, with fruitless effort to overstep the abyss that has eternally parted him alike from foe and friend. Such hopes as animate the rest from scene to scene exist but to show that from him hope is gone forever; and the tragedy closes as the intelligence is brought to him that, for the supposed act of treachery which he has not committed, his wife and two sons have been murdered by the Moor whom his victories had made master of his native land.

I propose now, as was done with *Gebir*, to fill in this outline of the story by a series of passages exhibiting the varieties of power and beauty with which its tragic scenes are written. Landor's style is here at its best; and contemporary poetry has nothing to show beyond *Count Julian* in purity or in grandeur.

In the first scene Opas, metropolitan of Seville, has found admittance to Julian's tent, ostensibly to induce him to see his daughter, but with the secret desire that his intercession may yet ward off the last meditated stroke of vengeance. Not unmoved but resolute is Julian's reply. He knows that by what already he has done,

"My fair fame in after-time  
Will wear an alien and uncomely form,  
Seen o'er the cities I have laid in dust."

But, until the tyrant is hopeless and beggared as himself, there can be no peace or comfort for him, and no child. The rejoinder of Opas, interceding with Julian for those to whom the war will bring unmitigated horrors, is one of the many evidences afforded throughout the scenes of Landor's recent personal experience of Spain.

"No pity for the thousand, fatherless,  
The thousands childless like thyself, nay more,  
The thousands friendless, helpless, comfortless. . . .  
Such thou wilt make them, little thinking so,  
Who now perhaps, round their first winter fire,  
Banish, to talk of thee, the tales of old,  
Shedding true honest tears for thee unknown:  
Precious be these and sacred in thy sight,  
Mingle them not with blood from hearts thus kind.  
If only warlike spirits were evoked  
By the war-demon, I would not complain,  
Or dissolute and discontented men;  
But wherefore hurry down into the square  
The neighborly, saluting, warm-clad race,  
Who would not injure us, and cannot serve;  
Who, from their short and measured slumber risen,  
In the faint sunshine of their balconies,  
With a half-legend of a martyrdom  
And some weak wine and withered grapes before them,  
Note by their foot the wheel of melody  
That catches and rolls on the Sabbath dance."

In the scene that follows between Julian and Roderigo, where the king has reached him protected as a herald, and offers to divide with him the throne, there are some noble passages. Roderigo is permitted to witness what the duty of revenge has cost the avenger. Julian exclaims in his anguish:—

"And Spain! O parent, I have lost thee, too!  
Yes, thou wilt curse me in thy latter days,

Me, thine avenger. I have fought her foe,  
 Roderigo, I have gloried in her sons,  
 Sublime in hardihood and piety:  
 Her strength was mine: I, sailing by her cliffs,  
 By promontory after promontory,  
 Opening like flags along some castle-tower,  
 Have sworn before the cross upon our mast  
 Ne'er shall invader wave his standard there."

Not the less is he adamant against every proposal for pardon of the outrage of his daughter, or for the baser compromise, which Roderigo urges on him, of condoning it by marriage.

"*Julian.* She call upon her God, and outrage him  
 At his own altar! *she* repeat the vows  
 She violates in repeating! who abhors  
 Thee and thy crimes, and wants no crown of thine.  
 Force may compel the abhorrent soul, or want  
 Lash and pursue it to the public ways;  
 Virtue looks back and weeps, and may return  
 To these, — but never near the abandoned one  
 Who drags religion to adultery's feet,  
 And rears the altar higher for her sake.

*Roderigo.* Have then the Saracens possess thee quite?  
 And wilt thou never yield me thy consent?

*Julian.* Never.

*Roderigo.* So deep in guilt, in treachery!  
 Forced to acknowledge it! forced to avow  
 The traitor!

*Julian.* Not to thee, who reignest not,  
 But to a country ever dear to me,  
 And dearer now than ever! What we love  
 Is the loveliest in departure! One I thought,  
 As every father thinks, the best of all,  
 Graceful and mild and sensible and chaste:  
 Now all these qualities of form and soul  
 Fade from before me, nor on any one  
 Can I repose, or be consoled by any.  
 And yet in this torn heart I love her more  
 Than I could love her when I dwelt on each,  
 Or claspt them all united, and thank'd God,  
 Without a wish beyond. Away, thou fiend!  
 O ignominy, last and worst of all!  
 I weep before thee . . . like a child . . . like mine . . .  
 And tell my woes, fount of them all! to thee."

In the second act Julian and his daughter are together, and the tenderness of his pity for her becomes more profoundly affecting from his inability to cheer her with other hope than that the misery brought upon Spain may last for ages.

"Crimes are loose  
 At which ensanguined War stands shuddering,  
 And calls for vengeance from the powers above,  
 Impatient of inflicting it himself.  
 Nature in these new horrors is aghast  
 At her own progeny, and knows them not.  
 I am the minister of wrath; the hands  
 That tremble at me shall applaud me too,  
 And seal their condemnation."

Then suddenly enters Sisabert, who had been betrothed to her, who believes the change he sees to be her own unfaithfulness leagued with



her father's ambition, and to whose reproaches neither can make the only reply which would show them to be unjust.

"We, who have met so altered, meet no more.  
Mountains and seas! ye are not separation:  
Death! thou dividest, but unitest too  
In everlasting peace and faith sincere."

When he has left the scene, this passes between the father and child: —

"*Covilla.* He thinks me faithless.  
*Julian.* He must think thee so.  
*Covilla.* O tell him, tell him all, when I am dead."

No, not death, cries her loving father; without crime she has suffered its penalties, and even on the earth there shall yet at the least be peace for her. The local coloring of Spain is again strongly here.

"*Julian.* Wide are the regions of our far-famed land:  
Thou shalt arrive at her remotest bounds,  
See her best people, choose some holiest house;  
Whether where Castro from surrounding vines  
Hears the hoarse ocean roar among his caves,  
And, through the fissure in the green churchyard,  
The wind wail loud the calmest summer day;  
Or where Santana leans against the hill,  
Hidden from sea and land by groves and bowers.

*Covilla.* O for one moment in those pleasant scenes  
Thou placest me, and lighter air I breathe!  
Why could I not have rested, and heard on!  
My voice dissolves the vision quite away,  
Outcast from virtue, and from nature too!

*Julian.* Nature and virtue! they shall perish first.  
God destined them for thee, and thee for them,  
Inseparably and eternally!  
The wisest and the best will prize thee most,  
And solitudes and cities will contend  
Which shall receive thee kindest."

On the eve of the decisive battle Opas makes intercession with the king, as fruitless as had been his appeal to Julian; pleads in vain for Egilona; and, replying to Roderigo's taunt that he wants no pity, wants nothing that enemy or friend can give, declares in these noble lines how lower than even Julian's is the fate that awaits the man who has wronged him.

"Proclaim we those the happiest of mankind  
Who never knew a want? O what a curse  
To thee this utter ignorance of thine!  
Julian, whom all the good commiserate,  
Sees thee below him far in happiness.  
A state indeed of no quick restlessness,  
No glancing agitation, one vast swell  
Of melancholy, deep, impassable,  
Interminable, where his spirit alone  
Broods and o'ershadows all, bears him from earth,  
And purifies his chastened soul for heaven.  
Both heaven and earth shall from *thy* grasp recede!"

In the same mouth is placed one of the most enchanting descriptions in the tragedy, where Roderigo's wife, Egilona, is exhibited as she was while yet her husband was true to her, and as she is, now

that his indifference and falsehood have transformed her, and she is ready to become wife to the infidel.

"*Sisabert.* She may forgive him yet.

*Opas.*

Ah, *Sisabert*

Wretched are those a woman has forgiven:  
With her forgiveness ne'er hath love returned.  
Ye know not till too late the filmy tie  
That holds heaven's precious boon eternally  
To such as fondly cherish her; once go  
Driven by mad passion, strike but at her peace,  
And, though she step aside from broad reproach,  
Yet every softer virtue dies away.  
Beaming with virtue inaccessible  
Stood Egilona; for her lord she lived,  
And for the heavens that raised her sphere so high:  
All thoughts were on her, all, beside her own.  
Negligent as the blossoms of the field,  
Arrayed in candor and simplicity,  
Before her path she heard the streams of joy  
Murmur her name in all their cadences,  
Saw them in every scene, in light, in shade,  
Reflect her image, but acknowledge them  
Hers most complete when flowing from her most.  
All things in want of her, herself of none,  
Pomp and dominion lay beneath her feet  
Unfelt and unregarded. Now behold  
The earthly passions war against the heavenly!  
Pride against love, ambition and revenge  
Against devotion and compliancy:  
Her glorious beams adversity hath blunted;  
And coming nearer to our quiet view,  
The original clay of coarse mortality  
Hardens and flaws around her. . . .  
His was the fault; be his the punishment.  
'T is not their own crimes only men commit,  
They harrow them into another's breast,  
And they shall reap the bitter growth with pain."

With the fourth act the stress of the tragedy arrives; for only with the completeness of Julian's victory comes the whole unutterable anguish of his misery. When the ruined and fallen king stands wailing before him for mercy, he employs an image to express his own present weakness and his former strength, which, for the vividness of its appalling contrast, is probably among the finest in the range of English poetry:—

"I stand abased before insulting crime,  
I falter like a criminal myself;  
The hand that hurled thy chariot o'er its wheels,  
That held thy steeds erect and motionless  
As molten statues on some palace-gate,  
Shakes as with palsied age before thee now."

The last lines are the only others I may quote from this great scene:—

"*Julian.* I swerve not from my purpose: thou art mine  
Conquered; and I have sworn to dedicate,  
Like a torn banner on my chapel's roof,  
Thee to that power from whom thou hast rebelled.  
Expiate thy crimes by prayer, by penances.  
*Roderigo.* One name I dare not . . .



*Julian.* Go; abstain from that;  
 I do conjure thee, raise not in my soul  
 Again the tempest that has wreckt my fame;  
 Thou shalt not breathe in the same clime with her.  
 Far o'er the unebbing sea thou shalt adore  
 The eastern star, and may thy end be peace!"

All that the tragedy has now to do is to show to its extremest verge what the conqueror and avenger is still to suffer; and with exquisite art the poet interposes before this a picture of what he had been before he lifted arms against the country that idolized and gloried in him. His foster-brother Hernando, who has cleaved to him through all, who in all that he has done is the solitary heart (except his daughter's) which has loved and comprehended him, strives to win him into gentler and reassuring thoughts by memories of the past.

"Often we hardly think ourselves the happy  
 Unless we hear it said by those around.  
 O my lord Julian, how your praises cheered  
 Our poor endeavors! sure, all hearts are open,  
 Lofty and low, wise and unwise, to praise:  
 Even the departed spirit hovers round  
 Our blessings and our prayers; the corse itself  
 Hath shined with other light than the still stars  
 Shed on its rest, or the dim taper nigh.  
 My father, old men say who saw him dead,  
 And heard *your* lips pronounce him good and happy,  
 Smiled faintly through the quiet gloom that eve,  
 And the shroud throbb'd upon his grateful breast.  
 Howe'er it be, many who tell the tale  
 Are good and happy from that voice of praise."

Again he takes up the theme:—

"Early in youth, among us villagers  
 Converse and ripened counsel you bestowed.  
 O happy days of (far-departed!) peace,  
 Days when the mighty Julian stoopt his brow  
 Entering our cottage-door; another air  
 Breathed through the house: tired age and lightsome youth  
 Beheld him with intensest gaze; these felt  
 More chastened joy; they more profound repose.  
 Yes, my best lord, when labor sent them home  
 And midday suns, when from the social meal  
 The wicker window held the summer heat,  
 Praised have those been who, going unperceived,  
 Opened it wide that all might see you well:  
 Nor were the children blamed, hurrying to watch  
 Upon the mat what rush would last arise  
 From your foot's pressure, ere the door was closed,  
 And not yet wondering how they dared to love."

But all such kindly efforts are vain; and at the opening of the fifth act, from the same friendly lips, we have a picture of him to which Mr. De Quincey's language will do greater justice than any words of mine. "Mr. Landor, who always rises with his subject, and dilates like Satan into Teneriffe or Atlas when he sees before him an antagonist worthy of his powers, is probably the one man in Europe that has adequately conceived the situation, the stern self-dependency and the monumental misery of Count Julian. That

sublimity of penitential grief, which cannot accept consolation from man, cannot hear external reproach, cannot condescend to notice insult, cannot so much as *see* the curiosity of by-standers ; that awful carelessness of all but the troubled deeps within his own heart, and of God's spirit brooding upon their surface and searching their abysses ; never was so majestically described."

The generous Moor, Tarik, having said that at last Count Julian must be happy, for "delicious calm follows the fierce enjoyment of revenge," here is what succeeds : —

"*Hernando.* That calm was never his: no other will be.  
Not victory that o'ershadows him sees he;  
No airy and light passion stirs abroad  
To ruffle or to soothe him; all are quelled  
Beneath a mightier, sterner stress of mind:  
Wakeful he sits, and lonely, and unmoved,  
Beyond the arrows, views, or shouts of men;  
As oftentimes an eagle, ere the sun  
Throws o'er the varying earth his early ray,  
Stands solitary, stands immovable  
Upon some highest cliff, and rolls his eye,  
Clear, constant, unobservant, unabased,  
In the cold light above the dews of morn. . . . .  
He cannot live much longer. Thanks to God!"

*Tarik.* What! wishest thou thy once kind master dead?  
Was he not kind to thee, ungrateful slave!

*Hernando.* The gentlest, as the bravest, of mankind.  
Therefore shall memory dwell more tranquilly  
With Julian once at rest, than friendship could,  
Knowing him yearn for death with speechless love.  
For his own sake I could endure his loss,  
Pray for it, and thank God; yet mourn I must  
Him above all, so great, so bountiful,  
So blessed once! bitterly must I mourn.  
'T is not my solace that 't is his desire;  
Of all who pass us in life's drear descent  
We grieve the most for those that wisht to die."

Solemnly beautiful is this close to the magnificent image with which the speaker opens. For all the irreparable ruin there is only death, and even Hernando wishes it for him ; not with any comfort in the thought that he wishes it also himself, but because only from the grave can ever come restoration or peace. While yet the hero, however, is in presence of the spectator, this is not to be. In the ordinary sense Death is necessary to constitute a tragedy ; but the intensity of tragic suffering here is in continuing to live.

If I add yet a few more lines from this remarkable poem, the apology which Mr. De Quincey made for giving but one passage will perhaps equally serve as mine for offering so many. "How much, then, is in this brief drama of *Count Julian*, chiselled, as one might think, by the hands of that sculptor who fancied the great idea of chiselling Mount Athos into a demigod, which almost insists on being quoted ; which seems to rebuke and frown on one for *not* quoting it ; passages to which, for their solemn grandeur, one raises one's hat as at night in walking under the Coliseum ; passages which, for their



luxury of loveliness, should be inscribed on the phylacteries of brides or the frescos of Ionia."\*

#### LOVE OF COUNTRY.

"All men with human feelings love their country.  
Not the high-born or wealthy man alone,  
Who looks upon his children, each one led  
By its gay handmaid from the high alcove,  
And hears them once a day; not only he  
Who hath forgotten, when his guest inquires  
The name of some far village all his own;  
Whose rivers bound the province, and whose hills  
Touch the last cloud upon the level sky:  
No; better men still better love their country.  
'T is the old mansion of their earliest friends,  
The chapel of their first and best devotions."

#### MONARCHIES ELECTIVE AND DIVINE.

"*Muza.* Where is the king?  
*Julian.* The people must decide.  
*Muza.* Imperfectly, I hope, I understand  
Those words, unworthy of thy birth and age.  
*Julian.* O chieftain, such have been our Gothic laws.  
*Muza.* Who then amid such turbulence is safe?  
*Julian.* He who observes them: 't is no turbulence,  
It violates no peace: 't is surely worth  
A voice, a breath of air, thus to create  
By their high will the man, formed after them  
In their own image, vested with their power,  
To whom they trust their freedom and their lives.  
*Muza.* They trust! *the people!* God assigns the charge!  
Kings open but the book of destiny  
And read their names; all that remains for them  
The mystic hand from time to time reveals.  
Worst of idolaters! idolater  
Of that refractory and craving beast  
Whose den is in the city! at thy hand  
I claim our common enemy, the king."

#### A STATESMAN'S CARES.

"O destiny! that callest me alone,  
Hapless, to keep the toilsome watch of state,

\* See the ninth volume of De Quincey's works (*Leaders in Literature*), pp. 326-332. The closing passage affords evidence still more impressive of the effect produced by this tragedy on a mind of no ordinary character. "After all has been done which intellectual power *could* do since Æschylus, and since Milton in his Satan, no embodiment of the Promethean situation, none of the Promethean character, fixes the attentive eye upon itself with the same secret feeling of fidelity to the vast archetype, as Mr. Landor's *Count Julian*. There is in this modern ærolith the same jewel-like lustre, which cannot be mistaken; the same *non imitabile fulgor*; and the same character of 'fracture' or 'cleavage,' as mineralogists speak, for its beaming iridescent grandeur, redoubling under the crush of misery. The color and the coruscation are the same when splintered by violence; the tones of the rocky harp are the same when swept by sorrow. There is the same spirit of heavenly persecution against his enemy, persecution that would have hung upon his rear, and burned after him to the bottomless pit, though it had yawned for both; there is the same gulf fixed between the possibilities of their reconciliation; the same immortality of resistance, the same eternity of abysmal sorrow. Did Mr. Landor *consciously* cherish this Æschylean ideal in composing *Count Julian*? I know not: there it is."

Painful to age, unnatural to youth,  
 Adverse to all society of friends,  
 Equality, and liberty, and ease,  
 The welcome cheer of the unbidden feast,  
 The gay reply, light, sudden, like the leap  
 Of the young forester's unbended bow,  
 But, above all, to tenderness at home,  
 And sweet security of kind concern,  
 Even from those who seem most truly ours."

## A CHARACTER.

"He was brave, and in discourse  
 Most voluble; the masses of his mind  
 Were vast, but varied; now absorbed in gloom,  
 Majestic, not austere; now their extent  
 Opening and waving in bright levity . . ."

## PERSECUTION AND ITS VICTIMS.

"Although a Muza sent far underground,  
 Into the quarry whence the palace rose,  
 His mangled prey, climes alien and remote  
 Mark and record the pang. While overhead  
 Perhaps he passes on his favorite steed,  
 Less heedful of the misery he inflicts  
 Than of the expiring sparkle from a stone,  
 Yet we, alive or dead, have fellow-men  
 If ever we have served them, who collect  
 From prisons and from dungeons our remains,  
 And bear them in their bosom to their sons.  
 Man's only relics are his benefits;  
 These, be there ages, be there worlds, between,  
 Retain him in communion with his kind:  
 Hence is our solace, our security,  
 Our sustenance, till heavenly truth descends,  
 Covering with brightness and beatitude  
 The frail foundations of these humbler hopes,  
 And, like an angel guiding us, at once  
 Leaves the loose chain and iron gate behind."

## CHRISTIAN SANCTIONS.

"Is any just or glorious act in view,  
 Your oaths forbid it: is your avarice,  
 Or, if there be such, any viler passion  
 To have its giddy range and to be gorged,  
 It rises over all your sacraments,  
 A hooded mystery, holier than they all."

## GUILT.

"Guilt hath pavilions, but no privacy."

## PEACE.

"Peace is throughout the land: the various tribes  
 Of that vast region sink at once to rest,  
 Like one wide wood when every wind lies husht."

## MUZA'S SON DESCRIBES RODERIGO'S FALL.

"There is, I hear, a poor half-ruined cell  
 In Xeres, whither few indeed resort.  
 Green are the walls within, green is the floor



And slippery from disuse; for Christian feet  
 Avoid it, as half holy, half accurst.  
 Still in its dark recess fanatic Sin  
 Abases to the ground his tangled hair,  
 And servile scourges and reluctant groans  
 Roll o'er the vault uninterruptedly,  
 Till (such the natural stillness of the place)  
 The very tear upon the damps below  
 Drops audible, and the heart's throb replies.  
 There is the idol maid of Christian creed,  
 And taller images whose history  
 I know not nor inquired. A scene of blood,  
 Of resignation amid mortal pangs,  
 And other things exceeding all belief.  
 Hither the aged Opas of Seville  
 Walkt slowly, and behind him was a man  
 Barefooted, bruised, dejected, comfortless,  
 In sackcloth; the white ashes on his head  
 Dropt as he smote his breast; he gathered up,  
 Replaced them all, groaned deeply, lookt to heaven,  
 And held them like a treasure with clasp hands."

JULIAN'S DESCRIBED BY THE SAME.

"Behold him, once so potent, still so brave,  
 So calm, so self-dependent in distress;  
 I marvel at him: hardly dare I blame  
 When I behold him fallen from so high,  
 And so exalted after such a fall.  
 Mighty must that man be, who can forgive  
 A man so mighty; seize the hour to rise,  
 Another never comes: O say, my father!  
 Say, 'Julian, be my enemy no more.'  
 He fills me with a greater awe than e'er  
 The field of battle, with himself the first,  
 When every flag that waved along our host  
 Droopt down the staff, as if the very winds  
 Hung in suspense before him. Bid him go  
 And peace be with him, or let me depart.  
 Lo! like a God, sole and inscrutable,  
 He stands above our pity."

Resuming Landor's correspondence with Southey, it will now be seen in what circumstances this poem was composed, what varieties of alteration it underwent, and what throes of labor and enjoyment, doubt and encouragement, hope and despair, attended the successive stages of its production.

The first allusion to it is in a letter of July, 1810, when Landor had heard from Southey that he was beginning a poem on Roderick.

"Among a dozen unfinished things, I have somewhere about the third of a tragedy, the subject of which is Count Julian. I represent him as the most excellent and the most *patient* of all earthly beings, till the violation of his daughter. When he hears the narrative of this, or rather narratives, for there are three, the inwards of his heart develop themselves. I have chosen that three different persons should describe to him the events that had taken place, both for the sake of variety and extent: a father and son, his friend and Florinda's lover, and a natural daughter of Roderigo, known at present only as the early confidante and companion of Florinda, and beloved by Count Julian. I left off this and began another on Ferrante and Giulio, natural sons of the Duke of Ferrara, half-brothers of Cardinal

Ippolito di Este. But I left off making cobwebs, for I felt no anxiety to catch flies. If I had finished Count Julian, he would have landed in Spain within a few hours of the first intelligence of his calamity ; for the Moorish army was investing Ceuta both by sea and land, and had only to sail across. He would have taken Roderigo prisoner during an engagement in the night, would have forced him on board a vessel, and have exacted no more than his oath to pass the remainder of his days in penitence at the Holy Sepulchre. If I had written down all I composed in my walks, I should perhaps have finished half. But I cannot sit to write anything, and whatever I propose to do, I leave undone. This argues a most deplorable imbecility of mind, such as never can happen but from an uninterrupted series of vexations and disappointments."

The reader sees, of course, how different was this proposed execution of the piece from that which he adopted. The theme he had chosen shook his friend a little at first ; but soon came the frank and generous praise. Southey thought the conception of the Count very fine and original : his own, on the contrary, imputing no grandeur of mind to him, but a great deal to his daughter. Not until November, writing from Bath, does Landor refer again to his tragedy, with characteristic account of how he had been writing it ; and the rough draft then enclosed of what he meant for its very last scene, sketched before the first scene of the first act was completed, is here given with the letter because of its agreement in feeling, but entire unlikeness in detail, to the scene as subsequently altered and printed. It begins when Julian has been told of the murder of his sons.

"One evening, as I returned from the concert, I wrote down a speech for my tragedy of *Count Julian*. I am happy we take such opposite, or rather such distant ground ; for if I came too near you, it would avail me little to be intrenched up to the teeth. My magnificent plan is now totally changed. I had made some fine speeches, really and truly ; but, alas, I rejected them all because they *were* fine speeches. I am a man who *semper ad eventum festinat* ; and although I have not more than about four hundred verses that will remain on the permanent establishment and do duty, yet I have finished the last scene. Here it is. I will write it as legibly as I can.

' *Julian (after a pause)*. I will not weep — pity and joy and pride  
Soften me and console me. (*Pause*.) *Are they dead?*

*Muza*. Yes, and unsepulchred.

*Julian*. Nor wept nor seen  
By any kindred and far-following eye? (*Pause*.)

O children, ye are happy. Ye have lived  
Of heart unconquered, honor unimpaired,  
And died, true Spaniards, loyal to the last.

*Muza*. Away with him!

*Julian*. Slaves! not before I lift  
My voice to heaven and man: though enemies  
Surround me, and none else, yet other men  
And other times shall hear: the agony  
Of soul, the wheel that racks the heart, is heard.  
Nature, amidst her solitudes, recoils  
At the dread sound, nor knows what she repeats.  
The cities swell with it. The villager  
Honeys with fallen pride his infants' lore.  
The element we breathe will scatter it.  
The ministers of heaven, presiding o'er them,



Breathe it! And none dares dream whence it arose.  
From prisons and from dungeons mortals hear  
Expiring truth, nor curse repentant crime.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*M.* Thy wife, Count Julian —

*Julian* (*afraid*).

Pause! —

*M.*

*Julian.*

— is dead.

Adieu,

Earth! and the humblest of all earthly hope,  
To hear of comfort, though to find it vain.  
O soother of my hours, while I beheld  
The light of day, and thine! Adieu, adieu!  
O my lost child, *thou* livest yet — in shame!  
O agony past utterance! past thought!  
That throwest death, like some light idle thing,  
With all its terrors, into dust and air, —  
I will endure thee, — for I see again  
My natal land, and cover it with woe.'

When Count Julian says to the messenger, Pause! he says it in great vehemence and distraction, as if he apprehended the same outrage as had dishonored his daughter.

"I have one passage which is better than this, and only one of any great extent. I will now give you a specimen of the old leaven: —

'*Opas.* I never yet have seen where long success  
Hath followed him who warred upon his king.

*Julian.* Because the virtue that inflicts the stroke  
Dies with him, and the rank ignoble heads  
Of plundering factions soon unite again,  
And, prince-protected, share the spoil in peace.'

"I sometimes rise into too high a key, but I have an instinctive horror of declamation."

Replying in December,\* Southey tells his friend that he is not sure he does wisely in rejecting fine speeches from his tragedy, and remarks of the speech of Julian above, given as a specimen of the old leaven, that it seems to him perfectly in character, such sort of reasoning being of the essence of passion. The concluding scene he thinks very fine, though he loses some of its force from want of knowing precisely the situation. One line, where the villager

"Honey with fallen pride his infants' lore,"

he does not *yet* understand. But, as in *Gebir* he used to read over difficult passages till the meaning flashed upon him, perhaps by tomorrow he shall feel the purport of this. The action of his own poem, he adds, does not begin till Landor's has finished, and he encloses and explains its opening sections. Landor meanwhile, at the end of the same month, had been sending further news of *Julian*, when, in the midst of his letter, that of Southey with its enclosures arrived. He has now altogether discarded the plan first chosen, and has concluded his first act on the new plan.

"I have completed my first act of *Count Julian*. I believe I have not a syllable to alter; but who knows that, so early in the business? Has no-

\* It is perhaps not necessary again to remark that what is quoted here of Southey's from the correspondence will not be found in his *Life* or *Letters*.

body ever chosen Count Julian for the subject of a tragedy? Not that I care, — I find that Alfieri has not. I shall reject the greater part of what I wrote long ago. I cannot graft anything on such twigs. I am abler than I was. I will cut all my figures out of one block, under one conception of their characters. My tragedy, after all, will have many defects; but I did not imagine I could do so well as I have done. The *popularis aura*, though we are ashamed or unable to analyze it, is requisite for the health and growth of genius. . . . \* I believe I am the first man who ever wrote the better part of a tragedy in a concert-room. Your letter has come this instant."

He explains the line not intelligible to Southey; throws out a remark worth study on the varieties of ancient method in poetical language; and closes with a remark on the opening of his friend's *Roderick*.

"I spared as poetry what I had once rejected as tragedy. 'Honeys with fallen pride,' &c.; the villager sweetens his children's lesson by giving them a story of fallen pride. This is the meaning; but nothing ought to stand in a tragedy of which one is obliged to say, This is the meaning. Added to which, all views of country life should be excluded by the turmoil and *déploiement* of the passions. The ancients permitted the sense to sink deeper below the surface than we do. Look at Pindar and Sophocles; or take Sophocles alone. His language is generally the sacred language of poetry in the more impassioned parts, though in the shorter and more familiar dialogue it is nothing more than the conversation of ordinary life. You rise in energy and spirit as you proceed; but I fear that the portico will be too large for the temple, if you propose to rear your structure by the ancient rules. Is this necessary? May not a poem be more comprehensive than we have been used to?"

Then, on the 21st of January, 1811, less than three weeks from the time when the first act had been completed, writing from the South Parade in Bath, he exultingly announces that the entire tragedy is done, and is unable to suppress the hope he entertains that it may even prove worthy to be acted.

"I have finished *Count Julian* this evening. It cannot be well done, written with such amazing rapidity. In forty hours I have *done* a thousand lines. Little of the original plan is retained, but about three hundred verses are unaltered, or nearly so. When my fingers are fairly well again, I will transcribe the whole for you, that the eye may take in all at a time. I ought to have it acted, as an indemnity for the sleeve of a new coat which it has actually made threadbare. Do not whisper to any one that I have written a tragedy. My name is composed of unlucky letters. But if you know any poor devil who can be benefited by the gift of one, he may have it, — profit, fame, and all; and what is more, if it is not successful, he may say it is mine. At all events, it will have a better chance with him than with me. It would be impossible for me, indeed, to have anything to do with such people as managers and lord chamberlains, — though, as the latter is a person of rather more consequence, I may employ him, a few years hence, to empty. . . . I used to believe that I was prodigiously less *absent*, as people call it, than other reading and writing men; and I can hardly bring to my

\* A touching passage, already given in note, p. 108, is omitted here.



memory an instance of the kind, before the one I am going to mention. I sent for a volume of Racine (having no books) from the library, for the sole purpose of counting what number of verses was the average of a tragedy. I was writing when it came; and I turned over his *messieurs* and *mesdames* with a vacant stare, and sent the volume away in a passion without the least idea what had induced me to order an author I disliked so much. Let me, however, do justice to Racine. I have a reluctance to begin, but if I begin I go on. His great fault is, every tragedy represents the same state of society, of whatever country the characters may be, or in whatever age the event. In a few of our higher feelings this is really the case; but the reasonings and moral sentiments of this poet, and above all the mode of expressing them, may be fairly laid down between the Luxembourg and the Bois de Boulogne."

He had indeed done wonders with *Count Julian*, was Southey's answer ten days later. He had never himself had a quicker run (in sailors' phrase) than twelve hundred lines in a week. But that was nothing to Landor's exploit; "and your manner involves so much thought (excess of meaning being its fault), that the same number of lines must cost thrice as much expense of passion and of the reasoning faculty to you as they would to me." To see the tragedy as completed he is now all impatience. As to the line of which he had asked an explanation, the meaning had flashed upon him, as he thought it would, ten minutes after the letter was gone, and he be-blockheaded himself according to his deserts.\* As to the notion of putting it on the stage he says, with a manifest ignorance of the art which may in some sort excuse his not less obvious contempt for its workmen and professors: "Of managers I have as great an abhorrence as you have; but if your play be fitted for representation, which is supposing it to have certain vices that it is not likely to have, and to be without certain merits which are sure to be found there, means may be devised of putting it into their hands, in that sort of cavalier manner which is likely to have more effect with such fellows than any other conduct." The tragedy, in its complete form, reached Southey with a letter of the date 5th February, 1811.

\* As an illustration not without value of what the keenest perception may here and there find "obscure" in Landor's style, I give, with his friend's comment and explanation, another passage which to Southey had been unintelligible. It is where Opas implores Julian that it should never be his

"To drag the steady prop from failing age,  
Break the young stem that fondness twines around;  
Widen the solitude of lonely sighs,  
And scatter to the broad bleak wastes of day  
The ruins and the phantoms that replied."

The last two lines being the difficulty, Landor told him thereupon that between them he had written

"Spectres of bliss and avenues of hope";

"the meaning being—and destroy all those scenes of privacy and retirement in which the wretched raise up those illusions which reply and are correspondent with their distempered imagination." The explanatory line nevertheless has failed to get into the printed copies of the play.

"I have labored days and nights, without intermission almost, in correcting my tragedy. I send it you transcribed. Keep the copy, for I never shall have another fair enough to print from, — if I *do* print. My rapidity in the composition was not quite so great as I led you to imagine. My hours were four or five together, after long walks, in which I brought before me the various characters, the very tones of their voices, their forms, complexions, and step. In the daytime I labored and at night unburdened my mind, shedding many tears. People have laughed at Voltaire for weeping at the representation of his own tragedies. For my own part I believe he never was half so sincere on any other occasion. Thorough-paced rascal and true Frenchman as he was, here was neither deceit nor affectation."

Not disappointed was Southey in the finished *Count Julian*. After six days he acknowledged it. Too Greek for representation in those days, it was altogether worthy of its author. The thought and feeling frequently condensed in a single line was unlike anything in modern composition. The conclusion too was Greek. He should have known the play to be Landor's if it had fallen in his way without a name. What that *was*, poor Rough's had only tried to be. Never was a character more finely conceived than Julian. The picture of his seizing the horses was the grandest image of power that ever poet produced, and in the very first rank of sublimity.\* Nor could he have placed the story in a finer dramatic light. Of course he must print the tragedy. It would not have many more admirers than *Gebir*, but they would be of the same class and cast; and with *Gebir* it would be known hereafter, when all the rubbish of their generation should have been swept away. And what, was asked in conclusion, would he do next? "I cannot reconcile myself to the abandonment of the *Phocæans*, of which the fragments are so masterly."

This, at the close of February, 1811, brings grateful reply from Landor. First he sends several corrections; says there was an embarrassed sentence at the end, to which after vast labor he has given pliability; and presents the last brief scene in an unquestionably improved form, as will be observed by comparison of the version given in these letters with that in the printed play. Then he continues: incidentally remarking on two subjects, Sertorius and Spartacus, from which Southey had been anxious that he should make choice for a poem, unless he should prefer to go on with the *Phocæans* : —

"I finished this tragedy only because I thought it disgraceful to have formed so many plans and to have completed none. Indeed, I had some doubt whether I could write a tragedy, a thing which I have always considered as a *desideratum* in modern literature. For the Harpies have left their filth among even the rich feasts in the theatre of Shakespeare, and Otway is an unclean beast. Surely an age that can endure the vile and despicable insipidities of Addison's *Cato* may listen to *Count Julian*. I wish it were possible for me, without a name, to bring it forward. I care not what is omitted in the representation. The plan and characters are well proportioned, which is sure to please people, though they know not why.

\* See *ante*, p. 168.



The events of the first act lead naturally to the last, and every scene is instrumental to the catastrophe. Twice I struck out and replaced the verses, 'O happy days,' &c.\* Such feelings and reflections occur in Sophocles and Euripides, but generally in the choruses. I wanted them as a *demi-tint*, to use the expression of another art, to surround and set off Count Julian. It relieves us from the agonies of the preceding scene, and renders him an object of the most powerful sympathy as well as of the highest admiration. How different from the man who is forced to become the scourge of his country!

"I never could have made the *Phocæans* a good poem. I began in a wrong key for English verse. I had written several hundred lines in Latin, but I threw them into the fire at the bad reception that English volume met with. If I had not, my *Latin* poem of 'Phocæis' would have been the sheet-anchor of my poetical fame, and the labor of this very hour, probably. It would have contained very, very little of what is now in the English.

"I admire the character of Sertorius more than any other Roman whatsoever; but the Romans are the most anti-picturesque and anti-poetical people in the universe. No good poem ever was or ever will be written about them. The North opens the most stupendous region to genius. What a people were the Icelanders! what divine poets! Even in the clumsy version of William Herbert they strike my imagination and heart differently from others. Except Pindar's, no other odes are so high-toned. I have before me, only in the translation of Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, the ode of Regnor Lodbrog, the corrections of which I remember. What a vile jargon is the French! 'Nous nous sommes battu à coups d'épées'!! There is one passage I delight in. 'Ah, if my sons knew the sufferings of their father, &c., &c. — for I gave a mother to my children from whom they inherit a valiant heart.' Few poets could have expressed this natural and noble sentiment; few are aware that it is the highest of all virtues to choose such a woman as may confer a good form and good dispositions on her progeny."

This striking letter, another proof of the invariable effect of the old Northern fictions on poets and men of genius, was followed after a few days by sundry fillings up for the last act of *Julian*, to come immediately on the announcement made to the hero of the death of his sons.

"The tragedy is now sixteen hundred lines long, — too much I fear; but when I recollect first one thing and then another which I have omitted, I cannot help saying of one or two favorites, 'I have thrown a pearl away richer than all its tribe.' But I was afraid of the verses above.† I fancied the tenderness of them was almost equal to what he felt for his daughter. This would have been wrong. I see it plainly, now I can bring the whole into one view, and at some considerable distance from the period of writing it. His feelings were inadequately and improperly expressed before. I made him betray some anger and resentment at the idea that Muza had caused

\* See *ante*, p. 169.

† The speech is that beautiful one in which, with pathetic yearning to his favorite, called after him, he contrasts the characters of his sons: —

"Ermenegild! thou mightest, sure, have lived!  
A father's name awoke no dread of thee!  
Only thy mother's early bloom was thine!  
There dwelt on Julian's brow . . . thine was serene . . .  
The brightened clouds of elevated souls,

the death of his wife.\* Now, the *keeping* is good, and I have only to scrutinize the words and retain the verses, which I do. I have added one touch of vanity and selfishness,† of that hardness which is so frequently superinduced on the female character when the bloom of early fondness is blown off."

On the 12th of March Southey answered. Too Greek for representation as he thought the tragedy to be, he seems nevertheless to have gravely entertained his friend's manifestly eager desire to have it acted. First he remarks upon the changes and interpolations,‡ and in particular says of the speech last sent, upon Julian's sons, that it is "a grand passage, — a mixture of the pathetic and the lofty and the profound, which is not to be found in any other living writer, and in very few of those who are immortal"; next he says that "there is nothing in the play so obscure as the last line and a half will be"; and then he talks of the stage. The chance for it, he shrewdly remarks, would lie in John Kemble's vanity; and he thinks that through Longman, who has some property in Covent Garden, backed by a note from himself, he can at least insure a reading from the actor-manager who would doubtless bring it out if he thought it calculated to display his talents, though as for "understanding the power and might and majesty that the tragedy manifests," this was not to be expected from a man who, after Shakespeare, could act in such trash as *Cato* and the *Revenge*: the last a play which had so turned his stomach on seeing it nine years ago that he verily believed he should never set foot in a theatre again. But was it, after all, worth trial? Less from its want of pageantry than because of its excellences, he very much doubted its success; and for himself he did not think he could ever consent to submit to the decision of such a crew as the London dramatic critics a production that had cost him thought and passion, blushes of cheek and throbs of head and quiet tears. However, he was ready to send the play to Kemble, and

Feared by the most below: those who lookt up  
Saw at their season in clear signs advance  
Rapturous valor, calm solicitude,  
All that impatient youth would press from age,  
Or sparing age sigh and detract from youth:  
Hence was his fall! my hope! myself! my Julian!"

\* See *ante*, p. 175.

† This is where Egilona, whose heart had softened to Roderigo on hearing of his last humiliation, hardens again at hearing that no word but that of penance had fallen from him: —

"If he had only called upon my name,  
Seeking my pardon ere he lookt to heaven's,  
I could have — no! he thought not once on me!"

‡ The reader who compares the last scene as given in Landor's letter at pp. 174, 175, with the same scene as divided into two in the printed play, will understand what these were; and, besides that named in the text, I may subjoin these: —

"The agony  
Of an opprest and of a bursting heart  
No violence can silence: at its voice  
The trumpet is o'erpowered, and glory mute,  
And peace and war . . ."



manage all the correspondence with him; and failing him, he thought he might send it with yet a better chance, through Walter Scott, to the Edinburgh theatre.

Landor promptly replied, after two days' interval, first, that Southey's remark on the last lines of the tragedy\* was perfectly just. He might explain them; but as he could explain them in two ways, and was not able to recollect his precise feeling at the moment of writing them, it was proper they should be altered. He would now say,

"I will endure thee! I have seen again  
My natal land, and covered it with woe!  
What can I not, what should I not, endure!"

That idea, he thinks, would open a new source of pathos. Then, as to the stage, he makes an interesting and noteworthy comment. Not until a quarter of a century later, the reader at all conversant with such matters will remember, this disgrace of the lobbies was wiped out by Mr. Macready, the last of the really great actors of our generation.

"Kemble may be tried. It really does appear to me, on recollection, that Count Julian is a character suited to him; but I have seen very little of Kemble. You would hardly imagine it, I have not seen a play acted a dozen times in my life. I am not remarkably pure or chaste; but to hear generous and pathetic sentiments and to behold glorious and grand actions amidst the vulgar, hard-hearted language of prostitutes and lobby-loungers, not only takes away all my pleasure by the evident contrast, but seizes me with the most painful and insuperable disgust. Added to which, I cannot restrain my tears, sometimes at even an indifferent piece. It is curious that we should be more anxious to conceal our best passions than our worst. Our pity and love are profaned by the most casual glance; but one would imagine our hatred and vengeance were pro bono publico. I think now of the public taste precisely as I did when I wrote the first preface to *Gebir*. That preface would not serve for a second edition. It was the language of a man who had not tried the public, and who threw down the full measure of his expectations. If *Count Julian* is endured, it will be because it is different from anything of the day, and not from any excellence. If Kemble will not act it, I would not submit it to inferior actors."

Thereupon, writing early in May, 1811, Southey told Landor he was going up to London, and would carry with him the tragedy for Kemble. He ought to jump at it if he knew what was really excellent in dramatic composition; but Southey did not expect that from him, and Landor might rely at least on the man's being made to understand that no favor was solicited, the obligation being quite as much on the Kemble part as on theirs. But at this point Landor seems suddenly to have gathered from Southey's tone, what he ought clearly to have discovered much earlier, how vain was any hope from that quarter; and the eagerness so suddenly expressed for the stage was now just as hastily withdrawn. "*Count Julian* shall never lie at the feet of Kemble. It must not be offered for representation. I

\* These remained still as in the first draft, *ante*, p. 175.

will print it, and immediately. Give me your advice how this is to be done."

Southey's advice was ready, though hardly what Landor meant by his question. "Print the tragedy in a volume," he wrote early in June, "with boarded covers, not as a pamphlet to be dog-leaved." Scott also, he told him, was writing on Roderigo; and if the old Goth ever got any literary news in the other world, it would surprise him to hear what work he had made for the poets of the nineteenth century!\*

While yet, however, that letter was on its way, Landor had written three or four more to his friend, each with its changes, interpolations, additions, or suggestions. Whether to admit the fresh lines that rise to his mind he is frequently doubtful; and the doubt mostly ends in exclusion. But some there are that haunt him, so that he cannot decide; and two or three, apparently unimportant, it had cost him a day each on an average to alter. The second scene of the third act he had found it necessary to enlarge; and instead of officers without names he had introduced Osma and Ramiro. By augmenting the same scene he had given time for the return of Sisabert and Opas, as well as reason and opportunity for the departure of Ramiro and Osma, to whose characters he had moreover given size enough for some discriminating touches. "I have made," he adds, "many improvements"; and he instances some new lines descriptive of Egilona.† Southey would observe also that he had slightly altered the last line. Does he now like it better?

"No, not yet, not quite," Southey at once replied. Those concluding lines were not yet what they should be; nor would Landor have asked for a further judgment if they had been. "All bad poets admire all that they write. A true one never suspects a passage of his own to be imperfect without cause. His suspicions are of the nature of conscience." But the passage he had sent descriptive of Egilona was indeed perfectly Landorean! "It has a character of sublimity wholly your own, and of that kind which has set the seal of immortality on *Gebir*." Not welcomer to the thirsty grass the summer dews and rains, than to Southey's friend his ever noble, unstinting, unmisgiving praise; and with fresh heart he labors on, adding, transcribing, strengthening everywhere.

"I have had enough trouble in the transcribing; I will have no more. The conclusion never pleased me, and I shall pass a few hours agreeably enough in bringing it nearer to my mind."

He had sealed his letter, but opens it again to send the fresh closing lines, which he thinks have something of a moral, — a thing most critics want.

\* Writing to Scott in 1812, to thank him for his *Vision of Don Roderick*, Southey tells him: "I have a tragedy of Landor's in my desk, of which Count Julian is the hero; it contains some of the finest touches, both of passion and poetry, that I have ever seen."

† See *ante*, p. 168. The introduced lines are those beginning, "Negligent as the blossoms of the field," to the close.



"I will endure thee, — I, whom heaven ordained  
Thus to have served beneath my enemies,  
Their conqueror, thus to have revisited  
My native land with vengeance and with woe."

Still this does not satisfy him ; and the letter containing it had hardly been despatched when another took to Southey the additional lines as they now stand.

"I have added some lines for the conclusion, more dramatic according to modern notions, containing one stroke more of Julian's character. He orders the guards of Muza to follow him. It was requisite that even Muza, at the last, should acknowledge his superiority.

'Henceforward shall she recognize her sons  
Impatient of oppression or disgrace,  
And rescue them or perish. Let her hold  
This compact, written with her blood and mine.  
Now follow me . . . but [*turning round, as he goes out, to Muza*] tremble!  
Years shall roll  
And wars rage on, and Spain at last be free.'

"I wrote also for my last scene, immediately on reading your letter, after some repressions, these lines : —

'Justice, who came not up to us through life,  
Loves to survey our likeness on our tombs,  
When rivalry, malevolence, and wrath,  
And every passion that once stormed around,  
Is calm alike without them and within.'"

That letter was written in the middle of June ; when already, after a fashion his friend had not dreamt of, he had been acting on Southey's suggestion about the printing of the play. The result was described in a letter from Llanthony on the 25th June, 1811 ; and a more characteristic one does not appear in the series.

"I sent *Count Julian* to your bookseller, Mr. Longman, and gave him to understand, though not in so many words, as people say, that you thought not unfavorably of it. I would have been glad to have given it up to him for half a dozen copies ; not that I have half a dozen friends who know anything of poetry, or indeed so many of any kind ; but I wanted half a dozen to give to people who have been civil to me. This would not do. I then proposed to print it at my own expense. This also failed. They would have nothing to do with it. We have lately had cold weather here, and fires. On receiving the last letter of Mr. Longman to this purport, I committed to the flames my tragedy of *Ferranti and Giulio*, with which I intended to surprise you, and am resolved that never verse of mine hereafter shall be committed to anything else. My literary career has been a very curious one. You cannot imagine how I feel relieved at laying down its burden and abandoning this tissue of humiliations. I fancied I had at last acquired the right tone of tragedy, and was treading down at heel the shoes of Alfieri."

At all this Southey is overwhelmed with grief. Why such a man as his friend, certain as he must be of the sterling value of his poems, should care either for good or evil report of them, was utterly unaccountable to Southey. He looked upon *Gebir* as he did upon Dante's long poem in the Italian, "not as a good poem, but as containing the

finest poetry in the language"; so it was with *Julian*; and so no doubt it was with the play he had so provokingly destroyed. Could he only have known that Landor thought of offering *Count Julian* to Longman, a word from himself would have prevented all that irreparable mischief!

"The people at that house know nothing about books except in the mere detail of trade; and the only thing which they would think of was, that single plays did not sell unless they were represented. And because these Paternoster Row men have acted in the spirit of their vocation, you have burnt a play which doubtless contained as much pure ore as *Julian*, and which would have lived as long as the language. Zounds! I could swear almost as vehemently at you as at them!"

This was written from London; in the interval before returning to Keswick, Southey and his wife visited Landor at Llanthony; and September was the date of Landor's next letter. He talks of the favorable weather, and what it is doing for the land. "After all this, if I talk of my tragedy, I shall remind you of the lottery-men in the newspapers. The weather has most certainly made several verses grow up in several places, and occasioned me to prune some of the rankest parts." He speaks of portions recovered from his holocaust of *Ferranti and Giulio*; and closes by saying that if Southey could tell him of any bookseller who would print *Count Julian* without giving him any more trouble than might arise from correcting the sheets, he should be very much obliged.

When that letter arrived at Keswick, Southey tells him on the 10th of October, both the Latin and English *Gebirs* were on his table. He had been putting them into the hands of Doctor Gooch, then on a visit to him; which was sufficiently expressing his opinion of Gooch, as it was a maxim with him never, except in the unavoidable way of publication, to throw pearls before swine. The doctor had left that afternoon, and the last word spoken by him at parting was an entreaty to himself to entreat Landor to write another poem. He winds up by saying that he had written by the same post to Murray, the publisher of the *Quarterly*, in order that no time might be lost about the tragedy. The result was declared in a note dated nine days later.

"Send *Count Julian* as soon as you please to Mr. Murray, Fleet Street, and he will be your publisher. I told him that I should recommend it to you to print only two hundred and fifty copies, because the play would be highly admired by the few, but probably not popular; being too good for the many. In the latter part of this opinion I may be mistaken; so much the better: in the first I cannot."

Landor acted on this suggestion at once; and in his next letter, at the opening of 1812, he is in the midst of proofs and printing. He forgets whether he had mentioned to Southey that after some deliberation he rejected the name of Florinda as that of Julian's outraged daughter.



"It is absolutely worse than Amanda or Musidora. I am certain that in the time of the Goths there never was so finical a perversion of a Roman name. I have substituted Covilla. It is said that the city so named was called so from La Cava; which, by the way, was a designation given after her death. If Covilla was named so after the daughter of Count Julian, that probably was her very name, without any change or derivation. I have said something of this kind in a short preface.

"Mr. Murray wrote me a very civil letter indeed. He prints the thing in the same manner as *Gebir*. I have added another fifty to the number of copies, wishing to give so many to the poor fellow who desired to print that poem, and suffered for his temerity. I believe he sold a hundred or two, but he printed five. I receive a sheet every week. At present only the first has reached me, but I expect another on Monday. Of course it will not appear in a shorter time than two months after this. If you have leisure to read it again, you will find that I have polished it somewhat. I have reflected more on it than on *Gebir*, and my critics will be very angry that they cannot find so many faults in it. I am surprised that Upham has not sent me Mr. Scott's poem yet. However, I am not sorry. I feel a sort of satisfaction that mine is gone to the press first, though there is little danger that we should think on any subject alike, or stumble on any one character in the same track."

Early in February, 1812, Southey received the printed *Count Julian*; and most fitly shall I close these curious critical passages by giving the substance of his manly letter. It was a work, as he believed, *sui generis*. No drama to which it could be compared had ever yet been written; and none ever would be, except it were by the same hand. Landor was the only poet whom it seemed to Southey impossible to imitate. Milton's language and structure, Shakespeare's phraseology, though attempted by men immeasurably inferior, might yet be so resembled as infallibly to remind of the prototype; but in *Gebir*, and still more in *Count Julian*, the manner was no more separable from the matter than the color from the rainbow. The form seemed incapable of subsisting without the spirit. And therefore never had he regretted anything so much as the play which Landor lately destroyed, — except the lost books of the *Faery Queen*; and for them he had never grieved to the same extent, because the evil was too long past to be a vexation as well as a loss.

Some of the finest passages as printed he found to be new. He spoke of the picture of the Spaniards at the opening, and of various passages with a marked local coloring in them,\* as evincing of what importance it was for a poet to have witnessed his own scenery. He singled out the description of Julian by Hernando, and the image of the eagle, as to his feeling in the very highest degree of sublimity. The concluding scenes, he also thought, were greatly improved.

What then would be the reception of this drama? With the Athenians for its audience, Southey could have told the author. But being what they were, and living in an age when public criticism upon works of fine literature was "at the very point of pessimism,"

\* The reader will find these, *ante*, pp. 137, 165, 166, 167, &c.

he could only guess that it would pass silently ; that a few persons would admire it with all their hearts, and all their soul, and all their strength ; but that envy and her companions in the Litany would not hear enough to induce them to blow their trumpets, and even abuse it into notoriety.

And thus, by a hand skilful as generous, was the horoscope of *Count Julian* cast, and its fate exactly prefigured !

### VIII. IN POSSESSION OF THE ABBEY.

Between Landor's return from Spain and his completion of *Count Julian* three years had passed, and personal incidents now calling for mention had occurred in the interval.

The Staffordshire estate, which had been so long in his family, and which alone became absolutely his by his father's death (the Warwickshire estates of Ipsley Court and Tachbrooke not descending to him until the death of his mother), fell short in value of a thousand a year, and went but an inconsiderable way to the purchase of an estate with an estimated annual rental of more than three thousand. But after the failure of Loweswater and its lake he had set his heart on Llanthony and its abbey, and everything had to give way to his overpowering desire to possess it. In the end his mother consented to sell Tachbrooke, the smaller of her two estates, to enable him to buy Llanthony, on condition of a life settlement upon her from the latter of four hundred and fifty pounds a year. What she thus gave her eldest son was the difference between that amount and the sum of twenty thousand pounds, for which Tachbrooke sold ; but she imposed only the further condition that the advowson of Colton should be surrendered to his brother Charles, to whom he had already presented that family living. An act of Parliament and the consent of all the brothers were required to give effect to these arrangements ; the settlement being the same as that of his mother's estates, upon Landor for life with remainder to his issue and that of his brothers successively in tail male. The act was also to enable additional sums to be raised upon the new purchase for improvements and to pay off mortgages, and it gave to the tenants in possession power to charge the estate with marriage jointures of not more than five hundred a year.

The letter of January, 1809, in which he told Southey that he had a private bill coming on before Parliament, replied likewise to an invitation from his friend to go to the Lakes, giving him the additional startling information that since affairs had been going on so badly in Spain he had again offered his services, and that if he went, there was little chance he should ever again see Derwentwater, or, what was next in beauty and he hoped to have called his own, Loweswater. But that he was *not* going, all the rest of the letter showed pretty clearly. " I wish I had settled in your country. I could live with-



out Bath. As to London, its bricks and tiles and trades and fogs make it odious and intolerable. I am about to do, whether I live or die, what no man hath ever done in England, to plant a wood of cedar of Lebanon. These trees will look magnificent on the mountains of Llanthony unmixed with others; and perhaps there is not a spot on the earth where eight or ten thousand are to be seen together." He proposed to be in London shortly, and should lose all abhorrence of travelling if he could but hope that they should meet.

No sooner did Southey get this news of the Parliamentary bill than he was all eagerness to introduce his friend to his older friend Rickman, clerk to Parliament, praised by everybody, and whom Charles Lamb thought to be the most perfect man, up to anything, down to everything, fullest of matter with the least verbosity, that he had ever known. He would manage all the House of Commons part of the bill. To him Southey wrote accordingly, with no misgiving that he should raise too high his expectation of the friend he had to introduce. In seeing him, he said, Rickman would see one of the most extraordinary men that it had ever been his fortune to fall in with, and who would be one of the greatest if it were possible to tame him. "He does more than any of the gods of all my mythologies, for his very words are thunder and lightning, such is the power and the splendor with which they burst out. But all is perfectly natural; there is no trick about him, no preaching, no parade, no playing off." Of Rickman at the same time he wrote to Landor, that he was a man to whom he owed hardly less than to himself in the way of mental obligation; for it was not more true that he had learnt how to see for the purposes of poetry from Landor than that he had learnt how to read for the purposes of history from Rickman.

I doubt however if these two worthies ever saw each other. Everything preliminary to the bill had to be done exclusively in the upper house, and Landor failed to find Rickman, though he attempted it twice. "My brother, who manages my affairs, saw him, but I did not; nor could I have enjoyed his conversation if I had, for London, as usual, gave me a fever and cough." Southey had explained his own inability to be in London at the time by a promise made to visit Walter Scott in Edinburgh; and Landor tells him in this letter to be sure and see Professor Young. "He is an admirable scholar; but his version of Tyrtæus is as bad as it ought to be. I met him at Harrowgate, and he showed me great civility." Unhappily the loss of one of his children prevented Southey's Edinburgh visit, and was thus referred to in Landor's next letter:—

"I fancied you were in Scotland, and my mind was often occupied on the accessions you had been procuring to your fame and happiness. If I moralize or reflect on these events, it disinclines me from speaking and from writing; not from an excess of sorrow or depression of spirits, so much as from inertness and torpor, and that flatness of soul lying abject at the foot of fatalism."

He had other matters equally troubling him at the same date. Though hardly yet in complete possession of the abbey, his "uninterrupted series of vexations and disappointments in connection with it" had already begun. Not only his Welsh neighbors had been doing him some mischief, but one of his own servants had cut down about sixty fine trees, lopping others; and this, which he considered as the greatest of all earthly calamities, as he told Southey in a letter from Bath, had confined him to the house several days. "We recover from illness, we build palaces, we retain or change the features of the earth at pleasure, — excepting that only! The whole of human life can never replace one bough." But it is time that I should now, however briefly, describe the place which was to be the source to him of so many anxieties, and whose acquisition cost him so much more than was justified or repaid by any happiness it yielded him.

A letter to me nearly thirty years ago thus whimsically referred to it: "Llanthony is a noble estate: it produces everything but herbage, corn, and money. My son, however, may perhaps make something of it; for it is about eight miles long, and I planted a million of trees on it more than thirty years ago. I lived there little more than eight months altogether, and built a house to pull it down again. Invent a hero, if you can, who has performed such exploits." Here was an instance of my old friend setting down as the thing he did the thing he only intended to do; for his million of trees fell considerably short in the reality of perhaps a tenth of the number at which his fancy reckoned them. Such as they were, however, his plantations have been the most profitable part of the estate; which might in other points also have deserved as little the irony applied to it, if its capabilities even to the same extent had been seen and used. Very far from ill laid out would have been the whole seventy or eighty thousand pounds drawn into it, if they had but been expended with competent skill and prudent management.

I saw it lately. From Abergavenny I posted along those eight miles of hill and vale which belong still to Landor's son, the mountains on either side becoming more steep, and the valley more rich and picturesque, as, twining round and round the circuitous approach, Llanthony comes in view. Less of corn than pasture there is of course, and much of unreclaimed and mountain waste; but I saw also, through the whole extent of valley that we passed, abundance of fair meadow land, farms to all appearance under good cultivation, and sheep feeding on the slopes that even the famous breeds which Landor boasted to have brought over from Spain could hardly have excelled. At almost the farthest corner of the northern angle of Monmouthshire, into which the estate projects itself, stands what is left of the abbey from which it takes its name; and it would not be easy to find in any part of Britain a ruin amid nobler surroundings.

It is at the base of an amphitheatre of lofty hills, forming part of



the chain of the Black Mountains, through which runs the rich deep vale of Ewyas. Drayton has described the place in that good old book the *Polyolbion*, which Charles Lamb himself could hardly have liked better than Landor did : —

“ ’Mongst Hatterill’s lofty hills, that with the clouds are crowned,  
The valley Ewyas lies, immured so deep and round,  
As they below that see the mountains rise so high  
Might think the straggling herds were grazing in the sky:  
Which in it such a shape of solitude doth bear,  
As nature at the first appointed it for prayer ” : —

and that still is the impression it gives. As it may have been two hundred or twelve hundred years ago, as when the old poet saw it or when the uncle of King Arthur is fabled to have chosen it for his retreat, it strikes the visitor now. I saw it in the later days of autumn ; but the gayety of summer would not have been so suited to the scene. Beautiful as the principal portion of the ruin is, the sense of beauty is not the feeling it first awakens. All that instantly attracts and fascinates the eye in the lovely and light picturesqueness of Tintern is absent from Llanthony. But deeper thoughts connect themselves with the solid simplicity of its gray massive towers, and the severely solemn aspect of its ruined church, taking from nature no ornament other than that worn by the hills around, majestic and bare as they, and even in ruin seeming as eternal. A place to meditate or pray in ; but not, one cannot but instinctively feel in looking at it, to carouse or build a house in.

What is yet standing of the house once attempted to be built there, something less than half a mile up the slope at the back of the abbey, is nearly all that is left upon the spot to point the moral of the story I am to tell. Of the million trees that were to have enriched the estate, but a small tithe are visible in the plantations now. The bridge built over the river Hondy that crosses the valley was swept away by floods. The praiseworthy design of restoring the magnificent centre nave, for which many Saxon and Norman stones were taken down and numbered, added only fresh fragments to the ruin. The road that was to connect the abbey with the mansion has all but passed away without a trace. But in three high ragged walls, open to the sky and when I saw them enclosing a haystack, and in some ruined but not yet unroofed stables and cellars, built on the very edge of a mountain stream that rushes swiftly past into the valley, what had once been an inhabited dwelling presents itself still. And the visitor who doubts the wisdom of building in such a scene at all has his wonder infinitely raised at the spot selected for the mansion.

Fifty-six years ago appeared the well-known *Beauties of England and Wales*, in which Landor is stated to have become recently proprietor of the abbey, and is reproached for indifference to its artificial beauties by having “ directed many alterations to be made in the ruins, and fitted up some parts for habitation.” This, however, is not just. Landor’s only wish was to restore ; and it was not his act,

but that of his predecessor, to build among the ruins. In March, 1809, a year before that book was published, he was thus writing to Southey: "I am about to remove an immense mass of building which Colonel Wood erected against the abbey, and with which he has shamefully disfigured the ruins. I would live on bread and water three years to undo what he has done, and three more to repair what he has wasted. It is some consolation to have the idea of receiving you in Monmouthshire next season. I will soon have something of a cottage built, and will send down a whole teacaddyful of books." The something of a cottage was the unfortunate mansion; but it rose from the earth so slowly and amid so many troubles and vexations, that he was fain from time to time to add to his temporary abode in the southern tower originally fitted up by Colonel Wood as a shooting-box, and which these additions enabled him to make his home for the most part of the time he lived at Llanthony. That home is now the Llanthony Abbey Tavern, the bailiff of the property being landlord; and its condition at this day is proof that Llandor's makeshifts "sixty years since" were not contemptible. Part of the old abbot's lodgings are adjacent, the arched refectory now serving for cellar to a spacious antique kitchen at the base of the tower; and there is also part of the old building in separate use as a farm, which then was available for domestic offices. Altogether, when the pictures had been placed and the teacaddy of books emptied, it was no bad temporary dwelling for the new lord of Llanthony.

Nor were the objects proposed by him in taking possession of his new estate other than the worthiest, and such as he might fairly have hoped to accomplish. He was bent upon restoring and civilizing on every side of him; the mountain wastes, the church and abbey ruins, the shocking impassable roads, the ignorant barbarous people. The extent to which he failed will appear as the little story unfolds itself, and some of the reasons why; but it is right to say at once that he really entertained such designs. Unhappily he found the stubborn and evil qualities of the Welsh in his neighborhood to be greatly in excess of his expectation; and what most repelled him from his self-chosen task was what should most have impressed him with its supreme necessity. Objecting a few years later to the phrase that the vulgar have their prejudices, he said that the prejudices belong not to them but to those who ought to remove them if they have any; and the same remark applies equally to other accompaniments of humanity in its more abased and neglected forms, which will ever remain ill-intentioned till we have given it other intention by some kind of cherishing and care.

Llandor's earliest correspondence about Llanthony was with the bishop of the diocese, Burgess of St. Davids, afterwards translated to Salisbury. A part of the estate was the living of Cwmyoy, of which the parish church is five miles from the abbey on the Abergavenny road; its chapel of ease, in which there is regular afternoon service



still, being the old church within the abbey enclosure ; a structure which by its rudeness as much startled me at my visit the other day, as it seems, when first seen, to have surprised and dissatisfied the new lord of the estate. He at once put before the bishop a proposal to restore what he believed to have been the original church, and to apply to more becoming use the materials of the existing chapel. His letter had been six weeks unanswered when he wrote again ; and one would like to have seen the bishop as he read this second letter.

“Several weeks ago I thought it my duty to address a letter to your lordship on some alterations it is expedient to make in the chapel of Llanthony. I wished to restore to its former state and uses an edifice which I believe to have been the original chapel, no less from its internal and external structure than from the field in which it is situated being called the Chapel Field. The ruinous place which receives the few people who attend divine service in the summer months was not originally built for any such purpose ; and your lordship is best able to judge, or to discover, whether it ever has been consecrated. If it has, it is the only instance of an ancient chapel in which I ever saw a chimney. It is under the same roof with ox-stalls, and surrounded with a farm-yard. My intention is to remove instantaneously the buildings on which it leans ; and it declines so greatly from the perpendicular that its fall is certain. I had hoped for permission to construct from the materials a school and a receptacle for the poor. I have conversed with the lower ranks of more than one nation in Europe, and last of all with those who have generally been considered the most superstitious and the most barbarous. But if drunkenness, idleness, mischief, and revenge are the principal characteristics of the savage state, what nation, I will not say in Europe, but in the world, is so singularly tattooed with them as the Welsh ? Had I never known how to appreciate the sacrifice your lordship makes, voluntarily and silently and alone, turning away your eyes from the most perfect models of the most polished ages on a country which at no period of its history hath produced one illustrious character, most certainly I should not have requested your assistance in forwarding its interests. God alone is great enough for me to ask anything of twice. I wished to repair some monuments of antiquity, and to rescue some others from the injuries of time. We have beheld without attention a strange phenomenon. While Scotland and Ireland have been producing in every generation historians, philosophers, and poets, the wretched Welsh repeat their idle legends from first to second childhood, bring forward a thousand attestations to the existence of witches and fairies, boast of their illustrious ancestors and of the bards more illustrious who have recorded them, and convert the tomb of Taliessin into a gate-post.”

To this the bishop was prompt in his reply, wisely avoiding the Celtic question introduced so explosively, and confining himself as strictly to the first letter as if but a jog-trot reminder had reached him with the second.

“Abergwilly, October 9, 1809. Sir, I am very sorry that your letter of the 13th of August has lain by me so long unanswered. My only apology is the true one, that it has been overwhelmed in an accumulation of daily correspondence. I was much interested in the subject of your letter, and in the liberality of your offer to exonerate the parish from all charges in the improvement which you suggest, by the removal of Llanthony chapel. I

should be very glad if my consent would be sufficient for enabling you to do what you think would be serviceable to the parish, as well as convenient to yourself. But I believe an act of Parliament would be necessary for the removal of a place of public worship. Of this, however, you are probably aware. I shall have it in my power very shortly to inform myself of everything that concerns your request and my consent, when you shall hear from me again. I am, sir, your obedient servant, T. St. Davids."

The promise was kept within a month; the bishop writing again on the 8th of November to tell Landor that, having had the opportunity of inquiring into the state of Llanthony church, and the advantages of the proposal for its renewal, he had no hesitation in giving his assent to it; but that an act of Parliament also would be necessary. To which Landor replied on the 15th from Clifton; first remarking very dryly that as he had recently been obliged to adopt such a measure to effect the settlement of some estates, he should be slow to renew his efforts in that quarter; and next proceeding to submit some points for episcopal consideration which the bishop found probably harder to digest than even the Celtic onslaught had been.

"Although the chapel might be better, I dare not replace it when we must be exposed ad millia quindecim et ducentos. When I first addressed your lordship on the subject, I had a precedent in view obscurely. Mr. Chetwynd, of Ingestre, had permission from the Archbishop of Canterbury to take down the parish church and build another. Plott mentions it in his *History of Staffordshire*. This event has been impressed on my memory from another cause. The church is dedicated Deo Opt: Max: although Voltaire has asserted that he was the first and only man who had ever dedicated a church to God. I should not have ventured so far in reply to your lordship's condescension, if I had been aware that Parliament had ever taken away or lessened this power in the bishop or the primate."

The bishop made no reply, and here ended Landor's first and last effort as a church-restorer. But a Conservative in church affairs he always called himself, soberly as well as jocosely; and when proposing, some thirty years later, to cut down bishops' incomes and add a trifle to the stipends of curates, he published his letters under that title;\* which, in this particular transaction of Llanthony church, let us confess that he deserved perhaps better than his right reverend correspondent did.

\* *The Letters of a Conservative* (1836). I quote from the third letter: "I had three church livings in my gift, one very considerable (about a thousand a year), and two smaller, which are still in my gift. It may therefore be conceived that I am not quite indifferent to what may befall the church. These things it is requisite to mention, now I deem it proper to appear not generically as a Conservative, but personally." A sentence or two from the second letter are also worth giving. "I never had a quarrel or disagreement with any clergyman on any occasion. I owe my education, such as it is, to virtuous men of that profession. Two of them are dead, whom I remember with love and reverence; the gentle and saintly Benwell, my private tutor at Oxford, and the good old fatherly Langley, who received me previously. The patient instructor and the gentlemanly scholar, Doctor Sleath of St. Paul's, will accept the gratitude, while he discountenances the politics, of his unruly pupil at Rugby."



Six months earlier than his first letter to the bishop he had been writing of the Welsh to Southey in much the same strain, and the letter will tell us also how slowly things were getting into shape at Llanthony. He writes from Bath, and has been sending a message to his friend's uncle, who had a parsonage on the borders of the Wye.

"Happily on the borders of the Wye the people are more civilized than about me. They are more active, and activity will not permit the lurking and loose indulgence of malignity and revenge. My people are idle and drunken. Idleness gives them time, and drunkenness gives them spirit, for mischief. I hope before the close, not of the next but of the succeeding summer, to have one room to sit and converse in, with two or three bedrooms. The bad weather has endangered both what is ruined and what is repaired. As these repairs are to be annihilated by me, I grieve the less; but if the stones are thrown down, they will be broken, and much time will be consumed in working more."

In the succeeding summer he wrote from Llanthony itself, not uncomfortably lodged in the southern tower, and eager to have a visit from his friend. Direful and never ceasing had been his troubles. His new house, not half finished, had cost him already two thousand pounds. Upon his estate, of which he had not been in possession three years, he had expended in labor eight thousand pounds. Yet the people who chiefly had benefited by this outlay treated him as their greatest enemy. The picture is not a cheerful one, but would probably have been not less true if its tints had been somewhat softened.

"While I was in Spain more injury was done to the abbey than I think it possible to repair, though I would live on a hundred a year for the remainder of my life to do it. In architects I have passed from a great scoundrel to a greater, a thing I thought impossible; and have been a whole year in making a farm-house habitable. It is not half finished, and has cost already two thousand pounds. I think seriously of filling it with chips and straw and setting fire to it. Never was anything half so ugly, though there is not a brick or tile throughout. Again and again I lament I was disappointed in my attempt to fix in your delightful country. The earth contains no race of human beings so totally vile and worthless as the Welsh. I doubt whether they will allow me to make improvements, I am certain they will not allow me to enjoy them. I have expended in labor, within three years, eight thousand pounds amongst them, and yet they treat me as their greatest enemy. Nevertheless, when I see the spherical head of a Welshman, I am indebted to him for a perfect view of Loweswater. My mind glances from him as the point of a sword from a block of stone, and I lose my aversion in my regret."

[The letter is finished at "Crickhowel" on "Monday morning."]

"So far I had written on Friday night. On Saturday I went to Ragland, and yesterday came hither. I am dismissing one half of my workmen; and by superintending the remainder I shall certainly find *πλέον ἡμῖν παντός*. When I had the happiness of meeting you in Bristol, you mentioned your design of coming into Monmouthshire this summer. I hope nothing will hinder it. Before two months have passed, I can give you a comfortable bed. I have two small rooms finished, and my kitchen will be completed

in six weeks. If you go soon to your uncle's, I will send you some melons. If he is fond of them, I will send him some more. Let me hear if you are not too busy, for I would wish him to remember me; though sending him melons is like twitching him by the coat to make him look back at me. When the weather is bad and unhealthy, as we have had it lately, I think of your little family; when it is fine I think of you and the mountains and lakes. Adieu. Let me add, for a little while."

The visit was not paid till the summer following; and soon after the date of that letter he left Llanthony. Worth subjoining are some remarks of his written just before he left to a friend (Miss Holford) who had sent him a printed reply to one of the sneering attacks on Wordsworth of which there was no lack in those days.

"I am not surprised that the criticism stands higher in your estimation than in mine. It is evidently the composition of a zealous and indignant friend. The poems, in my opinion, are far above the necessity of any such defence. The attack was not only weak but wicked. *Weak*, because a man of genius must know, and common minds alone can be ignorant, what breadth of philosophy, what energy and intensity of thought, what insight into the heart, and what observation of nature, are requisite for the production of such poetry. *Wicked*, to behold such signal gifts not merely with disrespect, but with irreverence and malice. I am sorry to say it, there is as great a difference between our commendations and our censures as there is between a riding-school and a race-course, both in respect to latitude and animation. Still, indignation is not only the offspring but the parent of injustice, as regularly as the John Joneses in my parish are fathers and children of J. Joneses with a Jones ap John between. I will show it to be the case in this criticism on Mr. Wordsworth, where there is often an outcry preceded by no wound, and a sarcasm accompanied by no wit. The charm of irony is always broken at the very first glance of anger. No writer ever wrote more violently than Swift, yet he had the just caution and genuine taste to keep his irony at all times separate from any such expressions. This, added to a closeness of argument and a compactness of style, was indeed his principal excellence. He never attempted to round his sentences by redundant words, aware that from the simplest and the fewest arise the secret springs of genuine harmony."

And because he would himself have liked that a particular letter should be printed that did not reach till he had quitted Llanthony, from which it followed him, I here subjoin it. During this year Doctor Parr had lost in rapid succession his wife, his granddaughter, and his eldest daughter (Sarah, married to Mr. Wynne);\* Llandor

\* Put up with the same letter, I find two others, dated respectively the 15th and 24th November, 1805, having reference to his younger daughter Catherine's death, really touching. I find also, under date of 21st June, 1808, a reply from Parr to Llandor's disavowal of a satirical attack that seems to have made some noise in Warwick. "To my learned, ingenious, high-spirited, sound-hearted friend, Walter Llandor, greeting. I had not even heard of the poem you mention; and if it contain any abuse of me, I should instantly have pronounced it impossible for such abuse to flow from your pen. My excellent and dear friend, how could you give yourself the trouble of defending yourself to me against a Warwick rumor; or for one moment suppose me so completely sottish as to believe such an imputation against Walter Llandor?" Some light is thrown on what the squib was, and on the general prevalence of the rumor that rendered necessary Llandor's disavowal, by the subjoined allusion in one of his sister



had been eager to offer sympathy to his grieving friend ; and here is the old man's acknowledgment, dated in August, 1810. It is curiously characteristic of him. One can hardly read it with gravity, yet it would be grossly unjust to treat it with disrespect. Grandiose and attitudinizing as it is, it is yet the expression of a genuine sorrow, for his daughter's death had struck him heavily.

"DEAR WALTER LANDOR, — Many and wise and affectionate are the letters which I have received from my friends, wishing to console me under the severe afflictions which with a rapidity almost unexampled have lately fallen upon me. But in candor of feeling, in grandeur of topics, in energy of language, they are far, very far surpassed by the letter which you wrote to me on the last and the heaviest of the calamities which I am doomed to suffer. Walter, I shall cherish and preserve it as a noble monument of your eloquence, your sensibility, and your friendship. My religious principles, Walter, are deep and most sincere. They are sufficient, I believe, to support me, even in this season of sorrow. I have yet remaining friends whom I love and honor. I have many duties to discharge for the good of my fellow-creatures. I resign myself to the unsearchable but righteous dispensations of my Maker ; and I will endeavor so to act that death succeeded by judgment may be a pure and perpetual source of the most salutary and animating reflection. I am going on a ramble into Shropshire, and pray write to me, at Rev. Mr. Butler's, Shrewsbury. I intend some time or other to go into Devonshire. I shall reside next in Bath, and I will so make my arrangements as to have the comfort of your society. Write to me, and come to me when you come to Warwick. Again and again your letter recurs to me, and refreshes me. Let us cultivate friendship while we continue in this world, and cherish the hope of meeting in another and a better state, where the pangs of separation will be felt no more. I pray God to bless you, and am most sincerely, dear Walter, your friend, S. PARR. When you have nothing else, or nothing better to do, recall to your mind the image of my dear Sarah, and employ your mighty genius in describing what you think of her deserts and her virtues. July 31, 1810."

From Bath, to which that letter was redirected, he continued to report to Southey of his buildings and plantings at the abbey ; and this was the winter when he began *Count Julian* in the concert-room.

"In reading your *History of Brazil* I envied those who possessed the seeds of the pine, and wish Sir Home Popham had brought a few to England. I am convinced that in time the prophecy in Virgil's *Pollio* will not be far from verified : *Omnis fert omnia tellus*. All resinous woods, I think, are better adapted to cold climates than to hot, because, if insects puncture them while young, or any violence is done to them in later periods, the gum

Elizabeth's letters of the 10th of June, 1808 : "A little poem entitled *Guy's Porridge-pot* has been much talked of here : it is printed by Slatter and Munday, and sent here to Perry's, who on reading sent it back again, as they feared to offend their neighbors by selling it. You are supposed to be the author, as Mrs. Perry told Ellen with some half-hour's circumlocution ; and she affirmed it to be the comicallest book she ever read. It could not be written by other people hereabout, because it was far too clever for them. It laughs at most of the people who go to Dr. Parr's, some it treats tenderly, some it roasts terribly ; whilst the Doctor himself fills the foreground of the picture, with all his good and many of his ridiculous qualities about him. Yet though it professes to bring in all who surround the Doctor, it never mentions your name." Landor nevertheless was not the author.

exudes from them and kills them. This cannot be so excessive in a colder and more astringent climate. I fancy I am acting wisely in ordering *ash* to be planted on the highest ground, because ash is more flexible and more tough than fir; added to which, by losing its leaves, it does not present so compact a body to the wintry winds."

Still his planting did not thrive; his cedar groves were like the groves of romance; and he saw the million trees with which he had indulged his fancy daily dwindle and decay. He began by buying two thousand cones, calculating a hundred seeds for each, and believing that such had really been the product; "but alas! the rains and the field-mice have hardly left me a thousand. I must begin again; and instead of raising a hundred and fifty thousand trees must be contented with fifty thousand, or perhaps with thirty." The rest of the letter is about *Count Julian*, which he says will be fairly transcribed within a week.

The evening of the day when the transcription began was for Landor a memorable one.

#### IX. MARRIAGE AND LIFE AT LLANTHONY.

Writing to Southey in April, 1811, of many unimportant and indifferent things; suggestions for his tragedy, criticism of an epitaph by his friend which he thought comparable to the few finest specimens of such things in the Greek, questions of whether they are to meet in London or in Bath, where he has a spare bed ready; he thus fills up the last unoccupied corner of his letter. "It is curious that the evening of my beginning to transcribe the tragedy, I fell in love. I have found a girl without a sixpence, and with very few accomplishments. She is pretty, graceful, and good-tempered, — three things indispensable to my happiness. Adieu, and congratulate me. I forgot to say that I have added thirty-five verses to Scene 2 of Act III. There was hardly time enough for the reappearance of *Opas*." Southey is delighted at the news and gives him joy sincerely. The very Welshmen will become more endurable if he takes a wife to Llanthony. He means himself to be at Bath in July, and insists that, if Landor is absent from it then, he shall come on to Keswick.

A few days after the letter to Southey he wrote to his mother, who had questioned him on the reports she had heard, qualifying her motherly interest with a little tender reproach.

"DEAR MOTHER, — I hasten to acknowledge your very kind and affectionate letter, though I am several hours too late for the post. You have, throughout the whole of my life, constantly treated me with the same goodness, and I should be very ungrateful if I could ever forget it. I hope we shall often meet again, and pass many happy days together yet. My presence will be so often requisite to overlook what is going on at Llanthony that I am afraid I should hardly be able to stay longer than a few days with you at Ipsley. It would give me the greatest pleasure to see you, and I



certainly would come over for that purpose if it were only for a day. The name of my intended bride is Julia Thuillier. She has no pretensions of any kind, and her want of fortune was the very thing which determined me to marry her. I shall be sorry to leave Bath entirely, but when I have completed my house I must remain there. Believe me, dear mother, your ever affectionate, W. S. LANDOR."

Not only had want of fortune been no sort of drawback, but it was in truth the *very thing* for which he was marrying the girl! There was small opening for family remonstrance after that, nor does any seem to have been attempted. The marriage took place before the end of May. It had all been arranged and settled after the manner of the eternal friendship between Cecilia and Matilda in the *Anti-Jacobin*. A sudden thought had struck him and the thing was done. He had married a pretty little girl, of whom he seems literally to have had no other knowledge than that she had more curls on her head than any other girl in Bath; and that she was, as I find him also saying in one of his letters, descended from a Swiss noble family. In sober fact his little baroness, as he liked to call her, was the daughter of a banker at Banbury, whom ill success had taken to other employment in Spain, while his family found a home in Bath. There was nevertheless, in all this, nothing of necessity to prevent the marriage proving suitable and happy, if what was so entirely wanting in both before the ceremony had only been in any sufficient degree supplied by either after it. This, unfortunately, continued to the last to be altogether absent; and with whom primarily, and to the greatest extent, the blame must be held to rest, I do not think there can be any kind of doubt. I will in fairness add what is told me by Mr. Robert Landor. "I must do this little wife the justice to say that I saw much of her, about three years after her marriage, during a long journey through France and Italy, and that I left her with regret and pity."

All the danger appears to have been foreseen by Birch, who wrote his congratulations from Magdalen College on the 20th of June. The marriage had taken him by surprise, and he had been expecting that Landor would have written to him. He now told him that such a step, he had long thought, would be likely to improve and secure his happiness, and he did not doubt but that the choice made would confirm this opinion. Excellent as the rude material might be, however, something would still be wanting. "You will think me a strange fellow for talking in this coarse and homely way on such an occasion. The air of a college perhaps contributes to chill one's feelings a little prematurely, though indeed it is time they should be pretty well sobered by the age of thirty-seven, at which I am now arrived. Well, then, do not smile at me, but it is my belief that an excellent wife is seldom made perfect to our hands, but is in part *the creation of the husband after marriage, the result of his character and behavior acting upon her own.*" How much might have been saved to

Landor if he had but taken sufficiently into his brain and heart these few wise words !

No misgivings had the good old Parr, nothing but affectionate rejoicings. "Be assured," he wrote on the 7th of June, "that my heart would leap for joy if I saw both of you at my parsonage gate, and that I should give you a most cordial reception. God bless you both ! Walter, your genius and talents, your various and splendid attainments, your ardent affections, your high and heroic spirit, will ever command my admiration, and give me a lively interest in your happiness. I have read the *Alcaics* five or six times. They are worthy of you." With the announcement of his marriage Landor had sent the stanch old Whig a Latin poem against the ministry.

By the middle of June Landor and his wife had taken up their abode at Llanthony, and at the end of that month he reminded Southey of his promised visit. "After my marriage I stayed at Rodboro' and Petty France for three weeks, intending to spring upon you on your way to London. There was a disinclination in my wife either to remain at Bath or visit Clifton. She wished to escape from visits of ceremony and curiosity, and I would not hint to her any reason why I should be happy to pass a few days at Bath." Telling him then of his correspondence with Longman about *Count Julian*, the ruin of his hopes and conflagration of his unfinished tragedies, as already detailed, he goes on : —

"I now employ my mornings in cutting off the heads of thistles with my stick, and hoeing my young chestnuts. My house is raised half its height. Do we lie out of your way ? I cannot promise you much comfort here, but I should be most heartily glad to see you. I live among ruins and rubbish, and, what is infinitely worse, bandboxes and luggage and broken chairs : but I have a spare bed in the same turret where I sleep ; and I have made a discovery, which is, that there are both nightingales and glowworms in my valley. I would give two or three thousand pounds less for a place that was without them. I hardly know one flower from another, but it appears to me that here is an infinite variety. The ground is of so various a nature and of such different elevations, that this might be expected. I love these beautiful and peaceful tribes, and wish I was better acquainted with them. They always meet one in the same place, at the same season ; and years have no more effect on their placid countenances than on so many of the most favored gods." \*

To this and another letter extending the invitation to Mrs. Southey, his friend replied from London in the middle of July that in three weeks they hoped to see him in his turret. They were to leave London that day week. Southey was full of hope and eagerness for the visit. He had been once at Llanthony thirteen years before, and had then to ford the Hondy on foot because he could not find a bridge. He wonders whether Landor had yet discovered the St. David's Cavern which Drayton places there, and for which he had himself inquired in vain. They proposed before nightfall on Monday,

\* For the rest of this passage in his letter, see *ante*, p. 8.



the 12th of August, to reach the Vale of Ewyas, where they would stay two days, going on then to Ludlow; and, weary of London which he hated, it would refresh him both soul and body to breathe the air of the mountains once more. No time was lost by Landor in replying.

"We shall be most happy to see you on the twelfth. But there are two things which trouble me not a little, — your departure so soon as two days afterwards, and your arrival here just at nightfall. The road is perfectly safe, and indeed excellent: but I, who could not in common decency take a seat in the inside of the carriage, dare not, for fear of a rheumatism which tormented me nearly two whole years, sit on the outside late in the evening. If you are resolved to continue your journey in such haste, however, do not let me lose the only chance perhaps I shall ever have of being your fellow-traveller. My travelling-carriage is the easiest I believe in the world, and the road to Hereford, through which place I presume you go to Ludlow, is the roughest. I have looked in vain for St. David's Cave: not a cave is there in my whole manor. This is very extraordinary in so mountainous a country, and where the earth has given way in so many other directions."

The visit passed off with perfect success. Visits of other friends were made in that and the following year; Landor's sisters came; and he prevailed even upon his mother to see for herself what the abbey was like; but he always had a satisfaction in remembering that the first who shared his turret with him there were Robert and Edith Southey. They stayed three nights and two days: days to which Southey referred six-and-twenty years later, when writing the prefaces to his collected poems, as having left with him still "a joy for memory"; and of which, more than forty years later, Landor gave this memorial, in lines to Southey's son.

"Twelve years had past\* when upon Avon's cliff,  
Hard by his birthplace, first our hands were joined;  
After three more he visited my home.  
Along Llanthony's ruined aisles we walkt  
And woods then pathless, over verdant hill  
And ruddy mountain, and aside the stream  
Of sparkling Hondy. Just at close of day  
There by the comet's light we saw the fox  
Rush from the alders, nor relax in speed  
Until he trod the pathway of his sires  
Under the hoary crag of Cwmyoy.  
Then both were happy."

Other memorial of the visit remains not, excepting in such hints as may be gathered of subjects talked of between them, from these passages of letters written immediately afterwards.

"Julia and I have been anxiously waiting to hear how Mrs. Southey and you find yourselves after so long a journey."

"This morning I had a letter from Portugal from a sensible man and excellent officer, Walter O'Hara. The officers do not appear to entertain very sanguine hopes of ultimate success. We have lost a vast number of brave

\* He means, from the time when Southey wrote the generous review of *Gebir*.

men, and the French have gained a vast number, and fight as well as under the republic. This revives in my mind a toast I was accused of giving at Oxford: May there be only two classes of people, the republican and the paralytic!"

"As there are not quarrels enough in the world, my plasterers and carpenters have had a vehement one, and one party or other resolved to go away. The dispute was referred to me. I told them I would examine it thoroughly; that a very few days would show who were in the wrong; and that if I heard anything more until I had taken time to consider, I should think those the most blamable who showed themselves the most impatient. How easily duped men are! I *had* heard nothing of the matters in dispute, yet all were satisfied, and probably I shall hear nothing, and they will all stay. I cease to wonder how Pitt, the shallowest man I can bring to my recollection, cajoled the gentlemen of the House of Commons, who certainly are far less acute than these carpenters and plasterers, and whose living is far less dependent on the continual practice of petty knaveries."

"Let me trouble you, if you have any correspondence with the agriculturist in Durham, to mention that I have already several hundred acres to let *instantly*, for a pound an acre, tithe free, extremely small parochial rates, a lease for twenty-one years, but after the first ten a rise of four shillings per acre. Many thousands of land to be enclosed, at three shillings for the first ten years, six for the remaining. A railroad now forming within a mile along a perfect level to the market-town; lime and marl on the estate, and underwood sufficient for all the new enclosures, which will be *given*. I hope to get a scientific tenant for about sixteen hundred acres. He shall have every encouragement, but he should have six or seven thousand pounds. I have received two offers since I saw you, but for parts only."

That last reference was to the subject of Landor's earnest wish to get a good tenant for a large farm at Llanthony, on which they had specially talked together at the visit; and it contained unhappily the germ of infinite vexation and trouble. Southey now replied that he had written to Durham, and hoped to get him the tenant; but he had to inform him afterwards that his Durham farmer, George Taylor, would not be ready for a year or two. Then there went another letter to tell him that Taylor had strongly recommended Thomas Hutchinson, the brother of Wordsworth's wife, and that through Wordsworth he was going himself at once to put the matter in train. "Thomas rents a farm not very far from you, being on the edge of Radnorshire near Kington: he is an illiterate man, but a very worthy one, and a thorough-bred farmer, with money at command."\* Un-

\* In the same letter from Keswick (of course unpublished, or I should not quote it), there is a whimsical mention of the lengths to which priest-tyranny was going in Ireland. "Wakefield, who is about a statistic account of Ireland, has been here. He tells me that when a Methodist gets up to preach to the people the Catholic priest comes with a horsewhip and lays about him till he puts the congregation to flight. This he has twice been an eyewitness of. The Bishop of Meath also, who is lodging here, tells me that when a school had been established in his neighborhood upon Lancaster's sneaking system of teaching no peculiar religion, the priest used to waylay the children with the horsewhip; and thus literally kept the little Catholics away by main force,



fortunately it turned out that even Thomas was not to be had either, and they must try again elsewhere. The man yet unthought of, who was to be Landor's plague in the matter, waited in the background. Southey had volunteered to find a "farmer agriculturist" willing to become a Llanthony tenant, and nothing short of success would satisfy him; but the very last man in his thoughts, the man of all others he was *not* likely to have chosen, the spiteful Fates had themselves already laid hold of, and when the rest had withdrawn were to thrust unasked on the scene. These are things of destiny.

By this time September had arrived; and the abbot of Llanthony, as his half-sister Arden persisted always in calling him, was writing with unwonted cheerfulness, as commonly happens at the very moment (astrologically) when some malignant influence is crossing one's house of life.

"Julia desires I will present her love to Mrs. Southey. 'Yes, if you will send it to Mr. Southey too.' We had lately some rainy days, after six weeks of weather perfectly fine and hot, — a thing never known before since the creation. Thanks to the comet. When Darwin was projecting a scheme for destroying the ice at both poles, I wish he could have found a coadjutor who would have planned a large wire trap, or any other, to catch comets. Your hills in Cumberland and ours in Monmouthshire might then produce plenty of good wine, and perhaps a little coffee. I seriously think we have the best climate in the world; because it is the most comfortable to brute animals, — and there are a hundred of these to one man, — and because men must be industrious to keep themselves warm in winter. Bodily strength, of course national strength, arises from it; together with such habits as exempt them from the vices of idleness." \*

When next he writes it is winter; but though the scene has sadly changed, he is happily unconscious yet of the blow that has fallen on him, and thus innocently discourses of that man of destiny, his coming tenant, who is to occasion him so much misery.

when he could not operate upon the minds of their parents." Remembering the clamor raised with especial vehemence at the time for Catholic "Emancipation," this seems rather strong.

\* The action of climate on character is a subject frequently mentioned in his writings; and something of the thought in this letter found afterwards nobler utterance in the magnificent lines (*Hellenics*): —

"We are what suns and winds and waters make us;  
The mountains are our sponsors, and the rills  
Fashion and win their nursling with their smiles.  
But where the land is dim from tyranny,  
There tiny pleasures occupy the place  
Of glories and of duties; as the feet  
Of fabled faeries when the sun goes down  
Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers strove by day.  
Then Justice, called the Eternal One above,  
Is more inconstant than the buoyant forms  
That burst into existence from the froth  
Of every-varying ocean: what is best  
Then becomes worst; what loveliest, most deformed.  
The heart is hardest in the softest climes;  
The passions flourish, the affections die."

"It is likely that I shall owe a tenant to you. A Mr. Betham has mentioned your name, and proposes to come over here next week. He brings his wife. I am afraid she will be starved to death almost. The rain runs every day down the stairs; and the wind, once or twice a week, blows half a window down. I cannot wait for my masons to finish. I must be off to Bath in another fortnight. This is no place to spend a Christmas in. I have lost some stained glass which I intended for my bath, and must supply its place with worse."

To which replied Southey that Charles Betham was certainly known to him, and came of an excellent stock, but he had never thought of asking him to be tenant at Llanthony. His knowledge of him was derived from a liking for one of his sisters, very dear to Charles Lamb as well as himself for her genius and goodness, though both had to be discerned through a most unprepossessing exterior and a nervousness looking like silliness. The introduction of her brother was the strangest accident. Writing to himself the other day she said her brother wanted a farm, but she as little expected in such a matter to be helped by him, as he to be asked by her. "Betham has probably to learn farming," he ominously added, "and so far is less desirable than Hutchinson." This was of course disregarded, and Betham was duly installed. Considerably more will be heard of him hereafter.

Landor's next letter was from Bath, and dated the 12th February, 1812 :—

"After travelling through Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and Warwickshire, where I passed several weeks with my mother, I went to superintend my workmen at Llanthony. Violent floods have carried away two bridges. I am engaged in building a third also, for the union of two farms, now under one tenant. I am rebuilding a house for Ch. Betham, and erecting a new one for a Gloucestershire man. Yesterday I returned to Bath, for the sake of meeting Mr. Thuillier, my wife's father.

A few months later Southey pleasantly took up the strain of Bath, the friends interchanged their experiences of the famous city, and what they said of it has not yet lost its interest.

#### SOUTHEY TO LANDOR.

"Will this find you in the Vale of Ewyas, or have you taken wing for Bath, which, in spite of thirty years' labor toward spoiling it, still remains the pleasantest city in the kingdom? I remember it when it ended at the Crescent, and there was not a house on the Bath-wick side of the river. The longest walk in which I was ever indulged was to a cottage, — *the cottage* we called it, in a little orchard, a sweet sequestered spot at that time, — my *ne plus ultra* then, beyond which all was *terra incognita*. No doubt it is now overgrown with streets. But the only alteration which I cannot forgive is the abominable one of converting the South Parade into one side of a square, and thus destroying the finest thing, perhaps the only thing, of its kind in the world. I have often walked upon that terrace by moonlight, after the play, my head full of the heroics which I had been imbibing, — and perhaps I am at this day the better for those moonlight walks."



## LANDOR TO SOUTHEY.

"You remind me of Bath! if not a delightful, a most easy place. I cannot bear brick houses and wet pavements. A city without them is a city fit for men before the Fall. But, alas, they fell before they built. The South Parade was always my residence in winter. Towards spring I removed into Pulteney Street, — or rather towards summer; for there were formerly as many nightingales in the garden, and along the river opposite the South Parade, as ever there were in the bowers of Schiraz. The situation is unparalleled in beauty, and is surely the warmest in England. I could get a walk into the country without crossing a street, which I hate. These advantages often kept me in Bath until the middle of June, and I always returned in the beginning of November. I wonder that your grave meditations were not disturbed there; for as sure as ever there was moonlight, a train — not *qualis per juga Cynthi exercet Diana choros* — was ready to invite you. I always hated plays and playhouses, and in the nine first years I was only once at the Bath Theatre; but if I had a very large fortune I would have one of my own, and give a company a thousand pounds to act once a week in the summer, for me and four or five more. I would have only the best actors and the best audiences, and I would have no comedies, — except Molière's, for the ladies."

What progress meanwhile was making in affairs at Llanthony, whether affecting Landor himself or his relations with the neighboring gentry, should now be told. Southey's prediction that a wife would make the very Welshmen endurable had unfortunately not been realized. Matters went on so badly, that even when the building of his house was finished, and some rooms had become habitable, he simply from time to time occupied these, left the rest unfurnished, and never wholly quitted the tower. He never seems quite to have settled to the conviction that he should continue to occupy the place. "This blessed day," he wrote in August, 1812, "to use an expression which people seldom use so emphatically, my masons have left me, after a job of three years. I live in my house merely to keep it dry, just as a man would live in a dog-kennel to guard his house. I hate and detest the very features of the country, so much vexation have I experienced in it. I wish to God I could exchange it for a house in Bath, or anywhere. Another man would not have the same causes for vexation. The people would not be his tenants. I never can be happy here, or comfortable, or at peace. Adieu. *Melioribus utere fatis!*" He had also special causes of vexation at this exact date, of which the brief narrative contained in letters preserved among his papers may now be not unamusing. It will at least be full of character.

Being a member of the grand jury of the county of Monmouth, he had startled his colleagues at the summer assizes of 1812 by an unexampled departure from precedent. Accepting in their literal signification the formal expressions in Mr. Baron Thompson's charge, he presented with his own hand into that of the judge a statement of alleged felony committed by one of the surveyors of taxes in the

county. And this he did, as he further amazed the learned baron by informing him, because his fellow-jurymen, whom with himself his lordship had adjured to lay before him whatever they might have heard of felony committed in the county, had in the particular case refused to perform that duty.

At the same time (29th August, 1812) he wrote to the grand jury in their official character to acquaint them with what he had done. I substitute initials for names, though there is nothing now to give offence to any.

"GENTLEMEN, — As one of the grand jury for the county of Monmouth, I have thought proper to give into the hands of Baron Thompson a statement of felony committed by J. P., surveyor of the taxes in that county. I understood that he was displaced from that office for neglect of duty, and since hear that he has been reinstated by the influence of Sir C. M. and Sir R. S. That he has on many occasions been guilty of vexatious surcharges is a matter of the most public notoriety; and that he has met with countenance and favor from certain men in power for something the very reverse of surcharging is as much the subject of general belief. That the minds of the common people, which are too apt to be unquiet in these times of severe and almost intolerable taxation, may be relieved from the painful idea that they are paying up the deficiencies of the rich, is the intention and purport of my letter. I was informed (I am not certain whether it was officially), when I came into the county, that if I would invite Mr. P. to dinner, and send him occasionally some game, I should not find him troublesome; that he surcharged Mr. B., of Caerleon, and offered to remove the surcharge for a dinner; that Major M. and Mr. J. of Lanarth for several years were not charged to near the same amount as he discovered they were liable to when hunger or resentment made him more keen; that Sir A. M., Sir R. S., Mr. L., of Landilo, and many other gentlemen in the neighborhood, have never been charged up to four parts in five of the amount. These things it is impossible for me to ascertain; but it is your duty to examine into them, and if I shall be found to mention the facts from light and frivolous report, I am subject to no small portion of just censure. I have heard it again and again, in the county and out of it; and was myself surcharged while I was in Spain. Since my return I was surcharged again, to which no man in his senses would be liable knowingly; and although half a year has elapsed, the surcharge has not been confirmed. A servant in my absence was twice seen riding an old coach horse of mine past use; while I was at Bath my gamekeeper was said to have dogs of mine, which however were not mine; and some other things were brought against me which I left totally to the management of my agent, as I did the whole of my entries, &c. For the present I think it more proper to lay this statement before you than before Parliament or the public; because an open discussion would irritate the public at a period of such accumulated oppression and almost universal distress; and because you will be equally able to quiet the minds of the suffering community by immediately instituting a strict inquiry, and by showing them that it is not they alone who are liable to surcharges, and that a surveyor is not readmitted to an office which he was dismissed from for neglecting, merely because he is favored by the rich and powerful, who are now not only the dispensers of but the gainers by this patronage. I have the honor to be, W. S. LANDOR."



Some days passed, and no direction for inquiry being vouchsafed by the judge, Landor proceeded to write to that learned person himself. He recounted what he had done, and why he had done it ; said he had never in the most trifling matter disputed or quarrelled with any of his colleagues on the grand jury ; named one of them as the magistrate who had given him the evidence on which the statement of felony was drawn up ; and asked if his lordship was prepared to screen these Monmouthshire gentlemen in refusing inquiry against the demand of that member of their body who had shown its necessity ; “ a man who never committed, or connived at, any base action, who never avenged an injury, who never accepted a favor at the expense of independence ; and who, in everything that elevates the character or adorns the mind, would blush at descending to a comparison with the first and wisest among them.” Very lately, indeed, it was reported, his lordship had entertained the majority of the grand jury at dinner, when this matter had been the subject of conversation ; and if he had really said to them, as alleged, in giving up the question to their wishes, *we shall all go to the House of Lords together*, he had taken accurate measure of the character of his present correspondent. “ I would indeed bring you all before the House of Lords if such a step were requisite ; but if I read your decision as clearly as you read mine, you will order the affair to be investigated, and you will consider it worth some deliberation whether felons should be servants of the king, or are proper supporters of his crown and dignity.”

The learned baron nevertheless, meaning nothing of the sort, prudently abstained from even answering the letter ; upon which Landor wrote again to remind him that there was a time when the courtesies of life required that a letter should be answered, though written by an inferior in fortune or in learning. “ Matters of even small importance had always their share of notice ; and somewhat was occasionally added that they might not repine at what they could not aspire to, and that the inequalities of fortune might be smoothened by her condescension. These things have been. Among the things that I should have fancied could never be, is a judge refusing to investigate a felony, when a grand juror, whom he had commanded to lay such matters before him, states the fact, and a magistrate brings the evidence. I acknowledge my error and must atone for my presumption. But I really thought your lordship was in earnest, seeing you, as I did, in the robes of justice, and hearing you speak in the name and with the authority of the laws.” And so ended the matter, as indeed it could not help ending ; Landor being not so much wrong as wrong-headed, and preferring to lose what he wanted rather than fail to overturn all common law and usage in getting it.

The transaction was in truth not so foolish as it looks. The object of Landor's wrath was an electioneering attorney whom everybody

believed to be a rascal, but some had found convenient to their purposes, others did not like to meddle with, and Landor alone was for exposing at all hazards. The thing in its way was quite as chivalrous as anything in the page of Cervantes, and to many, perhaps, will seem not much less absurd; but that at least one Monmouthshire magistrate, a clergyman and a man of education and refinement, thought Landor right and unselfish in moving in the matter, I learn from the letters of Mr. Davies of Court-y-Gollen. They are besides very pleasing evidence of the terms on which the lord of Llanthony remained with one of the most intelligent of the resident gentry as long as he lived in the county. The families exchange visits, and more substantial courtesies. Mr. Davies overflows with thanks for a Rembrandt Landor has given him, and sends him back no end of poplars and other trees. They stock each other's ponds and gardens with fish and fruit, discuss amicably Cuyps and Claudes, and do not quarrel even over politics. Mr. Davies is for an influence in the county adverse to the Beauforts, "or we shall be lost"; being appealed to in one of Landor's disputes with his tenantry, he decides in his favor, but not without shrewd advice as to points of temper; and he is one of the two magistrates long afterwards referred to in the imaginary conversation with a Florentine visitor, where Landor, speaking in his own person, says: "In the county where my chief estate lies, a waste and unprofitable one, but the third I believe in extent of any there, it was represented to me that the people were the most lawless in Great Britain; and the two most enlightened among the magistrates wished and exhorted me to become one."\*

He made the application accordingly; and I am able to relate from his papers what followed its rejection. The time for making it must be admitted to have been ill-chosen; his letter to the lord-lieutenant bearing date in the same month when he had written to the grand jury, the foreman of whom was the lord-lieutenant's brother. This was hardly an excuse, however, for the dryness of the duke's reply.

"Badminster, August 28, 1812. SIR, I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and to express my regret that at present it is not in

\* *Works*, I. 326. The result is thus described: "It would have been a great hindrance to my studies; yet a sense of public good, and a desire to promote it by any sacrifice, induced me to propose the thing to the Duke of Beaufort, the lord-lieutenant. He could have heard nothing more of me, good or evil, than that I was a studious man, and that, although I belonged to no society, club, or party, and never sat in my life at a public dinner, I should oppose his family in elections. The information, however probable, was wrong. I had votes in four counties, and could influence fifty or sixty, and perhaps many more: yet I never did or will influence one in any case, nor ever give one while Representation is either cheat or coxer. The noble duke declined my proposal." In the same dialogue he makes these further personal allusions: "Had avarice or ambition guided me, remember that I started with a larger hereditary estate than those of Pitt, Fox, Canning, and twenty more such amounted to: and not scraped together in this, or the last, or the preceding century, in ages of stockjobbing and speculation, of cabinet-adventure and counterfeit nobility. My education, and that which education works upon or produces, was not below theirs; yet certain I am that, if I had applied to be made a tide-waiter on the Thames, the minister would have refused me."



my power to comply with your request. I am, sir, your most humble servant, BEAUFORT."

Landor's rejoinder, written on the 2d of September, was not without dignity. Since it was not his grace's pleasure, he wrote, to nominate him on the commission of the peace, he requested that the duke would have the goodness to appoint some other person of more information and of more independence; "qualities which no one can better appreciate, and which are so abundant in all parts of the county, particularly the magistracy." It was absolutely requisite, he added, that some justice of the peace should reside within ten miles of Llanthony parish, in which, for want of one, every sort of misdemeanor was almost daily committed with impunity; and he now made that request not only as a compliment usually paid the lord-lieutenant, but to avoid any appearance of discourtesy in applying directly to the chancellor.

The duke made no reply: a circumstance he probably regretted when, after a very few days, the subjoined communication reached him, and, as well from its contents as from the papers transmitted with it, he knew better the kind of man he had treated with discourtesy.

"Mr. Landor begs leave to enclose some testimonies of his fitness for the office which, in furtherance of the public good, he was willing and desirous to undertake. When the lord-lieutenant sees them coming from persons of experience and virtue, it is much to be hoped that he will approach one step towards wisdom by taking some advantage of theirs. By generous and elevated minds many deficiencies are overlooked on a little relaxation of arrogance, and many follies are pardoned for retracting one. This observation is made by Mr. Landor in the same spirit of pure benevolence as constantly and zealously animates him in the guidance of weaker intellects, which are always in the more danger the higher the station is; and he entreats that it may not be considered as a reflection, much less as a reproach. He has been given to understand that the Duke of Beaufort acts honestly according to his ideas of honesty, wisely according to his ideas of wisdom, and independently according to his ideas of independence; and it would be ungenerous to try him by any other standard. Never will Mr. Landor be induced to believe that a person invested with authority (which, however, as a stronger safeguard against revolutionary principles, is more often conferred on rank than on information, and on subservience than on integrity) would, for the indulgence of an irrational prejudice, or the gratification of an unmanly resentment, render himself an object of detestation to the honest or of ridicule to the wise."

Landor followed this up by a letter of nearly the same date to the chancellor, in which he stated the urgent grounds that existed for the appointment of a justice of peace in the neighborhood. There was not one within ten miles, and several parts of the parish were thirteen miles from one. As a consequence thefts and every kind of misdemeanor were committed almost daily, and always with impunity. For men were unwilling to leave their little farms, cultivated

by their own personal labor, to take offenders a whole day's journey over mountains so wild and perilous; and were no less afraid of returning to their homes than reluctant at leaving them on such a business. He had mentioned these facts to the lord-lieutenant, and had taken the trouble also of drawing the inferences for him; but they were probably not understood. The office of a magistrate would of course be a troublesome one to a man of retirement and letters, if it was not presumptuous to call himself so; yet he was willing to have undertaken it. The Duke of Beaufort, however, thought him unfit, and he was quite content to submit to the decision of a person whose family had always been so remarkable for its discernment. His grace's inducement or motive he had not himself asked, this being an inquiry of a by no means philosophical cast; but it was right the chancellor should know the rumor prevalent in the county that the lord-lieutenant's principal reason "which it was foretold me would operate as it has done, is that I preferred a charge of felony against an attorney who is said to have been very serviceable in elections. In doing so, I conceive I did my duty as a grand jurymen. The chairman, Lord Arthur, thought otherwise: the rest followed." The letter closed with a waiver of his own claims in favor of any more suitable person, and with a reiteration that the appointment was necessary.

The chancellor made no reply. It is difficult now to believe possible, what could then be done, or omitted to be done, with perfect impunity. As Sydney Smith says of the time comprised in the first quarter of the century when this particular chancellor and his court pressed so heavily on mankind, it was an awful time for liberal opinions and for all who had the misfortune to entertain them. A man raising his voice against a Tory lord-lieutenant was a man crying out in a desert, with about equal chances of reply; but Landor did not therefore abate his voice, and happily we may hear it still. He wrote another letter, which I think myself fortunate to have found, because its interest rises above the occasion of it, and gives it value in a higher sense. It tells us what in favorable circumstances he proposed to have done at Llanthony, and what, in circumstances less happy, he did; and so much as it eloquently and quite truly claims of unselfishness of intention and worthiness of design may stand hereafter not unfairly against some serious faults and failures of execution. It is a masterly apology, if not a complete defence, and will soften if it does not arrest judgment. Its date is October, 1812.

#### TO THE LORD-CHANCELLOR ELDON.

"MY LORD, — It would ill become me to complain in public or private that your lordship has not noticed my letter. My letter was such indeed as any common person might have written, but the business was not a common, nor a private, nor an unimportant one. I requested that a justice of the peace might be nominated by your lordship in the district where I live. I



gave my reasons for the necessity of the thing itself, and of applying to you for its accomplishment. The lord-lieutenant had declined it. I never was anxious to obtrude myself on the notice of the great or of the public; but this affair is one in which the community is much interested. The choice of justices and their conduct are perhaps of greater importance than any things now remaining of the English constitution. I thought myself qualified. I have constantly endeavored from my earliest youth to acquire and disseminate knowledge. My property in the county is little short of £3,000 a year, and capable of improvement to more than double that amount. I have estates in other counties, both in possession and in reversion. I have planted more than 70,000 oaks, and 300,000 other forest trees; and I shall not leave off until I have planted one million. Fifteen thousand acres of land will allow room enough for their growth. Yet I have sought no medal or notoriety, and the mention of it is now extorted from me to prove that in one instance I have not without success attempted to benefit the county. I have at my own expense done more service to the roads in a couple of years than all the nobility and gentlemen around me have done since the Conquest; and I stated my desire of being in the commission of the peace to arise from the power it would afford me, at the sessions, of presenting what are still impassable, and of repressing those lawless acts which are committed in all countries where, from similar impediments, there is little intercourse with mankind. When the Duke of Beaufort thought proper to decline my offer, I wrote again to him with perfect temper, and requested him to appoint one better qualified. He had no reply to make. It may indeed justly be said of me, if anything shall be said, *Serit arbores quæ alteri sæculo prosint*; and what honor it will confer on the lord-lieutenant to have rejected the public and gratuitous services of such a man is worth his consideration rather than mine. It certainly will bestow on him a more lasting celebrity than any other Duke of Beaufort has acquired. I did not believe him to have been so ambitious. But if it should appear that any lord-lieutenant has erred in pursuing fame by a track so unfrequented and so cheerless, your lordship at least has the power of preventing the ill consequences which would arise from his stupid precipitancy or his unruly passion. You will not countenance irrational prejudice, will never support unmanly resentment, will never sanction dishonorable patronage. It is possible that a lord-lieutenant may have been instructed in little else than in the warring of hounds, the entrapping of polecats, the baiting or worrying of badgers and foxes; that he may be a perverse, and ignorant, and imbecile man; that he may be the passive and transferable tool of every successive administration; and that he may consider all whose occupations are more becoming, the gentleman and the scholar who is wiser or more independent than himself, as a standing and living reproach. In this case, which I entreat your lordship to consider as merely an hypothetical one, would not you be anxious to superintend him a little, and even to control him in the choice of those magistrates on whose information and on whose integrity the basis of English jurisprudence must repose? If, for instance, he should reject from the bench of justices a person who, in estate, understanding, quiet political demeanor, and sound constitutional principles, is rather more than on a level with the generality of them, and for no other reason than because this person, pursuant to a charge from the judge of assize, gave information of a felony committed by a partisan of that lord-lieutenant, would not you cry out against such an abuse of power, such a prostitution of honor, such a violation of equity, such a mockery of the judge, such a scandal and impediment and subversion of the laws? This case also, for

obvious reasons, must be hypothetical: but the answer may be direct, to the person and to the point. I never now will accept, my lord, anything whatever that can be given by ministers or by chancellors, not even the dignity of a country justice, the only honor or office I ever have solicited. In truth it was the only one fit for me. I cannot boast that high cultivation of mind, that knowledge of foreign nations, that intercourse with men who have established and men who have subverted empires, that insight into human nature, that investigation and development of the causes why Europe has diverged from the same (original) state of society into such variations of civic polity; in short, those travels abroad and those studies at home which have adapted the great statesmen of the day for the duties they so ably and disinterestedly fulfil. Yet somewhat of all these things have fallen within my reach and exercised my moderate powers of mind. DEMOSTHENES and POLYBIUS, LIVY and TACITUS, MACHIAVELLI, DAVILA, GRAVINA, BECCARIA, DE THOU and MONTESQUIEU, MILTON and SYDNEY and HARRINGTON and LOCKE, may console me for the downfall of my hopes from that bright eminence to which none of them, in these times and in this country, would have attained; and for which my pursuits equally disqualify me. Here I have only occupied my hours with what lie beneath the notice of statesmen and governors: in pursuing, with fresh alacrity, the improvement of public roads, of which already I have completed at my own expense more than a distance of seven miles over mountains and precipices, and have made them better and much wider than the turnpike roads throughout the country; in relieving the wants and removing the ignorance of the poor; and in repressing, by personal influence rather than judicial severity, the excesses to which misery and idleness give rise. These things appear of little consequence to the rich and prosperous, but they are the causes why the rich and prosperous cease to be so; and if we refuse to look at them now in the same point of view as humanity and religion see them in, they will have to be looked at hereafter from a position not only incompatible with leisure and quiet, *but far too close for safety*. I am, my lord, WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR."

With this, and a poetical epistle in the same month to Southey, the subject was dismissed, and he troubled duke and chancellor no more. Through the verses, perhaps more than through his graver protests, his bile had completely discharged itself; and for a better reason also than this the reader will thank me for subjoining some of them. They were the first important example of a kind of writing he was afterwards very fond of, and showed much mastery in: the rhymed verses which in Swift's time were called "occasional," but for which we now borrow an epithet from the French. Swift himself hardly threw them off more successfully than Landor. For it is the consummate art of such writing to seem infinitely easier than it is, and commonplace professors of it are slipshod when they ought to be easy. It should condescend without condescending, combine the most perfect finish with an apparent carelessness of rhyming, and to the utmost terseness of language give the tone of mere conversation.\* And hence it is that the finest examples of it are often found in men who have also written poetry of the highest order.

\* What other higher qualities it may be enriched by, I have expressed in my *Life of Goldsmith*, who wrote it as well as any man.



The opening couplet in the letter to Southey was taken from Catullus.

"Laugh, honest Southey! prithee, come  
 With every laugh thou hast at home;  
 But leave there Virtue, lest she sneer  
 At one 'most noble' British peer,  
 Who ties fresh tags upon his ermine  
 By crying 'ay,' and catching vermin.  
 Terror of those, but most the foe  
 Of all who think, and all who know. . . .  
 'Such characters,' methinks you say,  
 'We meet by hundreds every day;  
 And common dolts and common slaves,  
 Distinguished but by stars or staves,  
 Should glitter and go out, exempt  
 From all but common men's contempt. . . .  
 Ribbons and garters, these are things  
 Often by ministers and kings,  
 Not over-wise nor over-nice,  
 Conferred on folly and on vice.  
 How wide the difference, let them see,  
 'Twixt these and immortality!'  
 Yes, oftentimes imperial Seine  
 Has listened to my early strain.  
 Beyond the Rhine, beyond the Rhone,  
 My Latian Muse is heard and known.  
 On Tiber's bank, in Arno's shade,  
 I wooed and won the classic maid.  
 When Spain from base oppression rose,  
 I foremost rushed amidst her foes:  
 Gallicia's hardy band I led,  
 Inspirited, and clothed, and fed.  
 Homeward I turn: o'er Hatteril's rocks  
 I see my trees, I hear my flocks.  
 Where alders mourned their fruitless bed,  
 Ten thousand cedars raise their head;  
 And from Segovia's hills remote  
 My sheep enrich my neighbor's cote.  
 The wide and easy road I lead  
 Where never paced the harnessed steed;  
 Where scarcely dared the goat look down  
 Beneath the fearful mountain's frown,  
 Suspended, while the torrent's spray  
 Springs o'er the crags that roll away.  
 But Envy's steps too soon pursue  
 The man who hazards schemes so new;  
 Who, better fit for Rome and Greece,  
 Thinks to be — *justice of the peace!*  
 A Beaufort's timely care prevents  
 These wild and desperate intents.  
 His grandsons, take my word, shall show for 't  
 This my receipt in full to Beaufort."\*

\* Some of these lines he printed with variations in his *Dry Sticks*, having already admitted them, with erasure of every reference to the duke or the magistrates, into one of his published poems (*Works*, II. 635, 636), from which I borrow these additional verses:—

"Llanthony! an ungenial clime  
 And the broad wing of restless Time  
 Have rudely swept thy massy walls  
 And rockt thy abbots in their palls.  
 I loved thee by thy streams of yore,  
 By distant streams I love thee more;  
 For never is the heart so true

But though the affair was thus finally dismissed, it would be difficult to overstate its effect on his temper while it lasted. He had made up his mind even to quit England altogether, and become a citizen of France. He would live in some French town in retirement on half his income, and give up the other half to a trustworthy agent who should employ it exclusively in improving his English estates. I gather the details of this notable scheme from the letter which reasoned and shamed him out of it: a wise and kindly letter of his brother Robert's, who had forgotten it and the occasion of writing it, but whose permission I have obtained to insert it here. Dating so long since, it is identical in tone and temper with those that have enriched this memoir, and even as Mr. Landor writes of his brother now he was writing to that brother himself fifty-five years ago. It is dated from Dawlish in August, 1812.

"DEAR WALTER, — At the very time that I most assuredly expected to find that you were become exactly like other people, that you had been melted down, in the matrimonial crucible, to the same common shape and quality with other mortal men, you turn out a stranger fellow than ever! If you will listen patiently to me, I will modestly undertake to prove that you are wrong in every respect. First, to think of going into France when there is a peace. Supposing that a peace be possible, — which it is not while Bonaparte lives and this country remains unconquered, — who would voluntarily become the subject of such a tyrant? Who would sacrifice the right — whether he uses it or not — of speaking what he thinks? For my own part, if I were certain that I should never feel the slightest inclination to speak or write on political matters again, if I were certain of being protected and well treated, I would rather live as a day-laborer in England than as a prince in France. I should feel that in choosing to live under an absolute government, I voluntarily relinquished honor and liberty, that I went out of my way to seek a master, and to look for servitude. It is in vain to say that a man is not oppressed till he feels the oppression. I think with Johnson that ninety-nine men out of a hundred might live as free from any *actual* tyranny in Turkey as in England; but the knowledge that we are *subject* to tyranny, that we are *liable* to caprice, that we *must* abstain from such and such particular topics, is the torment. To see others oppressed without daring to expostulate, in fact to be indebted to the forbearance of any absolute authority, is degrading. It may be said that people are wronged and oppressed even in England sometimes, and that they can obtain no redress; but that will not apply. No government can hinder some injuries; but the constitution does not authorize them; and the laws, however administered, are in themselves just. Consequently there may be wrong, but there is no degradation. You say that a proof is

As bidding what we love adieu.  
Yet neither where we first drew breath,  
Nor where our fathers sleep in death,  
Nor where the mystic ring was given,  
The link from earth that reaches heaven,  
Nor London, Paris, Florence, Rome.  
In his own heart's the wise man's home!  
Stored with each keener, kinder sense,  
Too firm, too lofty for offence,  
Unlittered by the tools of state,  
And greater than the great world's great."



wanting that no personal desire of gain has influenced your actions. This implies some deference to opinion. Now, what would not only your enemies, but even your friends say, if you settled either in France or in any other country under French influence? The latter would say that 'this apostle of liberty, who passed so much of his life in praising it, who not only talked of it and wrote for it, but who gave his money and risked his person to defend it, he has left his connections, his property, his country, and has chosen to live under the most arbitrary government in Europe.' Your enemies would point you out as an example to prove that extremities often meet, and that what they call Jacobinism is closely allied to Tyranny. I do not say this to dissuade you from going into France and settling there, because I know that you will never be able; because the war can never terminate till either this government or the French government is overthrown; but to dissuade you from entertaining, and still more from disclosing, a wish which many men who hate your character and envy your understanding will otherwise exult at. No, sir, everything, so far, can be explained by the love of liberty. You will never do, or on consideration wish to do, what you talk of. As for the determination to give up society, and to spend the best half of your income in improving your estate, that I think also wrong. Why not enjoy yourself now? Why look so far forward, and that for those who at present are not in existence? It is making money of too much consequence, and time of too little. You will leave as good a fortune as you received, without anxiety or deprivation. Instead of shutting myself up at Llanthony, I would take a pleasant house in a good neighborhood, and live, after setting apart a quarter of my income for repairs, on the remainder. A man, and particularly a married man, risks everything by determining on solitude. Solitude influences the temper in one year more than society can in twenty. It creates habits and feelings the most dangerous, particularly to a warm and sensitive character. The melancholy man becomes infinitely more melancholy, and the proud man more proud. That which was at first a rill becomes a torrent. There is no resistance, no hope. I am both melancholy and proud, and I dread solitude. The more I observe, the more I am convinced that everything in life which is singular is dangerous. You have now the happiness of others to consider; so take the safest road, which is the commonest. I have a right to talk to you in this way because you mention your schemes, and because I am vested with authority to teach and preach, though the hearers may be wiser and better than myself. I had much to say about books, but my paper is filled and my beef is growing cold. Let me hear from you at Dawlish, where I shall continue this month. I have been told that notwithstanding your indifference" [in marrying] "about everything else besides good temper, you have contrived to get a great many other qualities into the bargain. Yours affectionately, ROBERT EYRES LANDOR."

Landor acquiesced and submitted. But it is to be added, quite apart from any question of individual complaint, that his opinion of the way in which affairs were at this time administered in England differed materially from his younger brother's; and that what he has been writing on that special subject to Southey\* during the past two years is consistently the tone of all his letters, and has upon it the impress of very strong convictions unwarped by personal irritation or wrong. The reader will perhaps not be sorry to have some of these

\* See *ante*, p. 145.

opinions laid before him. Originality and interest always, very frequently great worth and value, constitute a claim to preservation even apart from their striking illustrations of character.

## X. PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

Southey's connection with Scott's scheme of the *Edinburgh Register*, for which he had undertaken to supply the history of each year as Burke did for Dodsley's, led to occasional interchange between the friends on the political questions of the day more frank and outspoken than his *Quarterly* lucubrations at any time afforded. In the Review he was never able quite to unmuzzle himself, and it is curious to observe how ill from the first he and Gifford got on together both in politics and literature. As for the notice he wrote of *Count Julian* for the *Quarterly*, and by which he hoped to have given Landor satisfaction, Gifford had so completely knocked its brains out before publication that no subsequent mention of it, to Landor or any one else, was ever made by the writer.

Sending his friend in the summer of 1810 the first volume of his *Edinburgh* history, he tells him of the second he is already working at; inquires as to places visited by Landor in Spain, of which he wishes to give good descriptions; and, declaring his opinion that that country is not to be subdued, says he means to burst out upon the subject on all fit occasions. The French emperor, he believes, will find the grave of his power in the Peninsula; and he takes pride in the opportunity this history-writing for the *Register* is giving him, to denounce all incapable half-hearted contemporaries, and to "speak of Bonaparte as befits a republican." \* Not backward of course is Landor's sympathy here; and finding his friend's history much to his liking, he praises loudly its manliness and spirit. †

The next prominent subject in their letters is Southey's increasing work for the *Quarterly*, with which his grumbling at the editor continues to keep pace; but he has good hope that he will not meddle with a forthcoming article on Methodism which he has written in reply to Sydney Snaith's in the *Edinburgh*, and which he shall follow up in the number following with a mortal blow at Malthus, the especial object of his contempt and abhorrence. Then, after several months, while yet he is in pains of labor with his second product of history

\* Another passage in this letter (suppressed in the printed copy, *Letters*, II. 203) says that he gets £400 a year from this undertaking of Scott and the Ballantynes, and that he has vested £209 of his first year's payment in a twelfth share of the concern, which is to bring him in forty per cent. Poor Landor himself could not have taken a simpler or more sanguine view of the transaction. Alas! we find Southey soon in trouble arising from this over-confident calculation, and glad to put off further responsibility by sacrificing all he had invested.

† One exception only he makes, in highly characteristic phrase. Why should Southey have thrown so romantic a cast over the valor of a certain general, "as great a rascal as any of his family, which has been rascally for many generations"? He was a Welshman.



for the *Register*, his article on Methodism has appeared and given such delight to Perceval that Southey feels he has lost a rich benefice by not going into the church.\* There are, however, subjects less pleasant. Had Landor seen Jeffrey's criticism on *Kehama*, as original as the poem and altogether matchless for impertinence? And had he not, seeing what the Portuguese had just done (it is now May, 1811), repented of his unkind words about them in his letters to Riguelme? Characteristic in every point was Landor's reply, in which the reader will not now care to criticise closely words out of which the heat and venom have long since departed. Jeffrey himself gave hard words in those days, and was prepared to receive them; but, though a greatly overrated literary critic, he was a man of prodigious ability in various ways, of an unequalled quickness and keenness of intellect, and with a power of inspiring attachment possessed only by sincere fine natures.

"I was shamefully wrong in speaking as I did of the Portuguese, and I am very glad they have acquitted themselves, and punished me, in the manner they have done. Men are brave until bad governments have made them forget the use of bravery. Then the very breed degenerates for want of action. Look at the Chinese for an example.

"Your review of Methodism is admirable. It is impossible to mistake the author. This is not my observation: it is Mrs. Carrick's.

"Jeffrey is called a clever man, I hear. If so, people may be clever men without knowing the nature of a lie, or the distinction between virtue and vice. No species of dishonesty is surely so unpardonable as Jeffrey's, no profligacy so flagitious. Thievery may arise from early example or from urgent want. It may have grown into an incurable habit, or have been pushed on by the necessities of nature. A man may commit even murder itself from the sudden and uncontrollable impulse of a heart still uncorrupted; but he must possess one of a very different kind who can air and exercise his faculties on no other ground than the destruction of fame and the mortification of genius. I was once asked whether I would be introduced to this gentleman. My reply was, No, nor to any other rascal whatsoever. I like to speak plainly, and particularly so when the person of whom I speak may profit by it."

That was in May, 1811; and Jeffrey, if he could have read it and the letter which followed it in July, would doubtless have smiled at the worshipful society of rascals in which he found himself. Landor was then expecting his friend at Llanthony, and after telling him of the copy of Drayton's *Polyolbion* he had bought at Rugby,† thus continues:—

\* This I need hardly say was Southey's destination originally, if he had found himself able to accept the Articles. I possess a curious little note of Coleridge's to Cottle in 1796, consisting simply of these words: "DEAR COTTLE. I congratulate Virtue and her friends that Robert Southey has relinquished all intentions of taking Orders. He leaves our party, however, and means, he thinks, to study the law. Yours, S. T. COLERIDGE." "Our party" was the Pantisocratic expedition.

† See *ante*, p. 13. He cannot tell how to direct that letter, "and the worst is, I never was right in my life if I hesitated." Alas! it was his habit of not hesitating oftener, and reflecting more, that led him into all kinds of intemperances of act as well as speech.

"What a series of fools and scoundrels have managed this country! Surely such fellows as Pitt and Fox should never have gone further than the vestry-room. A parish workhouse had been too much for their management, and they have been making a national one!"

It must at the same time be admitted that this sort of thing was more harmless than Southey's occasional outbreaks. A few months later there is a letter of his, a strange medley of shrewdness and violence, criticising affairs in Spain, hopeful of Wellington, giving Bonaparte a lease of less than seven years, confident of seeing a peace dictated under the walls of Paris, and condemning the Spanish soldier Blake as a general, which ends by his declaring it humiliating that Spain should have produced two centuries ago half a dozen men resolute in a mistaken cause to slay the Prince of Orange at the sacrifice of their own lives, "and that now she has not found one to aim a dagger at the heart of Bonaparte!" Southey was more scrupulous than his friend as to flinging about reckless epithets; but where he felt very strongly, the flame of his anger burnt with a fiercer as well as a more intense glow.

Replying at the opening of 1812 from Bath, whither he had gone to meet his wife's father, Landor says:—

"Mr. Thuillier has just left Cadiz. He represents the government as fools and traitors, every individual intent on making his fortune. It grieves me to hear that Blake also was accused of the same unworthy propensity, and that not a doubt was entertained that all his principal officers were *latterly* in the French interest. Zayas is not exempt. Mr. Thuillier knows many members both of the government now existing and of the last. *All* the old ones hold office under the present, in one form or other. It certainly was intended to sacrifice the English at Barrosa, where he also was, and where that silly fellow Whittington was acting under La Pena. Had he marched with two thousand men under his command, the French might easily have been cut off from their *retreat*, for retreat they most certainly did. It is terrible to think that, such is the state of Europe, no nation can go on tolerably well without an usurper. France would have fallen without Bonaparte. If Palafox had retired from Zaragoza, he might have rescued Spain. The world is ruined by stupidity, and not by knavery or cruelty. I heard it reported, for I never read any newspaper or new book, that Lord Cochrane is appointed to a command of ten thousand men in Catalonia. This is so wise a thing that I cannot believe it. He would do more with ten thousand than any other English officer with thirty thousand. If he really has the appointment, I will lay a thousand guineas to three farthings that the ministry act in such a manner as will force him to resign in six months. If I were unmarried, I would join him; and I think, with my fortune, I could show a way in which ten thousand men might do greater things than these are destined for. *Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ.* It would be easy with such means to draw round them twice as many Spaniards who would laugh at nation and party. In fact there is not a government in Europe that might not be and should not be destroyed. The French is unquestionably the best, because it is in the hands of the wisest; as for virtue or vice, the shades of difference are utterly undiscernible."



This was written a few months before his scheme of finding a home for himself in France, so wisely rebuked by his brother Robert ; but it was not to his discredit at this time that while denouncing as loudly as Southey the misdeeds of Bonaparte, he recognized not only his genius, which the other never did, but, in the fact of his being by far the ablest of living Frenchmen, some sort of reason for putting him at the head of France. There was small comfort of that kind to be got out of a survey of the existing English government, whatever its other merits might be ; and if the genius for statesmanship possessed by Pitt and Fox were to be measured by the England they had left behind them, by ministerial purity, party fidelity, or national prosperity and honor, Landor had some excuse for pitching it so low. It was a time when disasters were certain and victories yet doubtful, and when the people were as unfairly restricted in their liberties as in their energies, industry, and enterprise. With the regency had begun the undisputed reign of the mediocrities, Mr. Perceval entering with the new year as Lords Grey and Grenville were finally bowed out ; and England had become chiefly famous for Walcheren defeats abroad, for machinery riots and bread riots at home, and for every kind of revolting variety of ex-officio informations and furious attacks on the press. So great was the misery about Llanthony, Landor proceeds to say in his letter, that not only had his people ceased to be mischievous, but had even lost the spirit to exult in their landlord's losses and misfortunes. He puts the matter with a whimsical sense of humor that we cannot but smile at still.

"What think you of our detestable villains of *the House*? While the people are starving for want of food and employment, those infamous scoundrels reject an act for the enclosure of waste lands. So the attorneys and the commissioners will eat up two thirds of the scanty allotments which would otherwise be the portion of the poor. If they suffer this, they will deserve their sufferings. Three pounds of miserable bread costs two shillings at Abergavenny. The poor barbarous creatures in my parish have actually ceased to be mischievous, they are so miserable. We can find them employment at present, and four-and-sixpence a day ; yet nothing can solace them for their difficulty in procuring bread. All my hay is spoilt. This is always worth a day's meal to them, but it can happen only once in the season. The poor devils are much to be pitied, for they really look now as if they hardly enjoyed it. It is their moulting time, and they cannot crow."

That letter was dated the 12th of February, and was crossed by a letter from Southey of two days earlier date, written in much alarm. "Trotter's book" was the life of Fox lately published by his secretary ; and with Mr. Murray, the reader will remember, Landor had been placed in communication by the printing of his tragedy.

"About an hour ago came a parcel to me from Murray, containing among other things an unfinished commentary upon Trotter's book. Aut Landor, aut Diabolus. From the manner, from the force, from the vehemence, I concluded it *must* be yours, even before I fell upon the passage respect-

ing Spain, which proves that it was yours. I could not lie down this night with an easy conscience if I did not beseech you to suspend the publication till you have cancelled some passages: that attack upon Fellowes might bring you into a court of justice; and there are some others which would have the more painful effect of making you regret that you had written them. . . . I have but looked into the leaves as I opened them, and will not delay this entreaty a single post: but to-morrow I will point out every passage which is likely to inflict undeserved pain upon others, and therefore to recoil upon yourself. It would equally grieve me to have the book suppress, or to have it appear as it is. It is yours and yours all over, — the non imitabile fulmen."

On the 15th Landor replied, telling what the thing was, how it originated, and the objection Murray had himself made to a proposed dedication of it to the President of America, against whom England was then on the eve of a declaration of war. This, the rejoinder of Southey, and the letters that followed, besides being highly characteristic, have a special value for the completeness of the description they give, not only of the Commentary, of which a few copies got into subsequent circulation as "*Observations on Trotter's Life of Fox*,"\* but of a suppressed companion tract called the Parallel, and of the suppressed Dedication. All that Landor intended by them, the startling paradoxes put forth in them, the personal attacks they contained, and the strange combination throughout them of largeness and wisdom of view with proposals worthy of Laputa and an absurd intemperance of expression, we see in these letters so vividly depicted that any further allusion or quotation will not be necessary.

"Did I never mention that I was writing the Commentary? In truth I seldom can tell whether I have communicated any thought or intention of mine, so that often I must appear the most barren of tautologists, and often more reserved than a Quaker or a Jesuit. How egregiously mistaken are those who judge of people by their letters, or indeed by anything they write! Not twenty men know that Addison and Pope abounded in the worst basenesses, or that Swift was anything better than a satirist and misanthropist.

"I will do precisely as you recommend, and request you particularly to mention such other passages as should be cancelled. If there is any eloquence in the Commentary, I will give you the reason. I was determined to try whether an *oration* could not be written more like what the Athenians were accustomed to commend than any such speeches as we have heard in Parliament, or than any which were delivered in the French Academy. I first apologized for praising the living instead of the dead, and

\* A reference to this is in one of the letters of an old country gentleman of Staffordshire, Mr. Whitby of Creswell, whose son, the captain of the frigate *Cerberus*, which formed part of the squadron in the Adriatic, was hero of one of the most daring individual exploits in the war, often referred to in exalted strain by Landor. Returning thanks for a copy of *Count Julian*, which Murray had just published, Mr. Whitby tells its author that his brother, the rector of Colton, had called and told him of the publication of some *Observations on Trotter's Life of Fox*, which he was extremely anxious to see, because with no one upon politics did he so entirely agree as with Landor, and his independence of all party. In another letter he tells him he has read the *Observations*, and found them filled to overflowing with original and bold remark.



argued that although some might pervert the practice, yet with others it would undoubtedly have the effect of preserving them from subserviency and corruption; that, to give themselves the importance which they claimed on the assumption of such an office, they must preserve a perfect and most absolute independence, and cherish in their own hearts those virtues whose features they were desirous of transmitting to posterity. I praised Hastings, and drew a comparison between him and Fox; but, said I, possibly this great ruler may have been deaf to the voice of misery and of justice. I drew a comparison also between Lord Peterboro' and Lord Wellington, in which I *proved* the latter to be equal to the other. In short, with reference to the military administration, I preferred the present to every other in this reign except Lord Chatham's. But I asked myself what source of corruption these Percevals and people had cut off? What protection they had given to freedom or to literature?

"After all, who will read anything I write? One enemy, an adept in bookery and reviewship, can without talents and without industry suppress in a great degree all my labors, as easily as a mischievous boy could crush with a roller a whole bed of crocuses. Yet I would not destroy what I had written. It filled indeed but eight or nine sheets, interlined, it is true, in a thousand places and everywhere close. I transferred, then, whatever I could conveniently, with some observations I had written on Trotter's silly book, and preserved nearly half, I think, by adopting this plan.

"I am surprised that Murray should object to publish my dedication to the President of the United States. It is very temperate, and, I believe, not ineloquent. War is not declared; and I earnestly point out the mischief it would do America, — how deplorable that freemen should contend with freemen, and diminish a number already so reduced! I never wrote anything better. It contains the best sentences of my oration. I will desire Murray to send it you, together with a piece aimed at the attorney-general of Ireland, but not mentioning him, nor subject to the cognizance of even an attorney-general's law."

In his allusions to America Landor had greatly the advantage of his friend, who had no indisposition to the war then imminent, was ready to give credit to any absurdity that might help to put a wider breach between us and our transatlantic kinsmen, and was as eager as many people since have been to believe in a disruption of the United States Republic as both desirable and likely. What he says, on the other hand, of George Rose is not a bad comment on what Lord Shelburne is reported to have said to him, "Good God, Mr. Rose, why have you not more ambition!" Rose had been twenty years Pitt's secretary to the treasury, and was everybody's factotum in those days; but we may easily understand Landor's slowness to recognize abilities of which only the most meagre memorials have even yet come to light, though he has been dead half a century. In the recent changes Rose had stuck to Perceval, in spite of all Canning's attempts to draw him off; and his appointment as treasurer to the navy, with Croker for secretary, a selection he was supposed to have suggested but which in reality he very strongly disapproved, had greatly moved Landor's wrath. The whole of Southey's letter, which is dated February 21, 1812, is worth preserving; and among

the personal bitternesses in the Commentary, the reader will not be unamused to see, Fellowes and Kett \* had not been forgotten !

"I have re-read and re-re-read the Commentary. The dedication and the postscript are so full of perilous matter that it will be difficult to weed them clean. And there is this objection to both, that they, far more than the Commentary itself, tend to produce that state of feeling which such wretches as Cobbett are continually laboring to excite and inflame for the worst purposes. We are suffering for the Anti-Jacobin war, — the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, — now it seems as if you designed to represent that the sins were our own. That we are not in peace and abundance and security is the effect of *that* war, — *this* is unavoidable, and so are the expenses which it necessitates.

"We rivet the chain in Sicily, and we do not break it in Portugal; but certain it is that in Spain we have pressed upon the government the necessity of liberal measures and popular reform. Towards the Spanish colonies this country has not acted ill; all that it could do was to endeavor to mediate. Those colonies offer a wretched prospect; they are even more unfit for independence than the Americans were, who have become independent (by our fault most assuredly) a full century before they were of age. See what it is to have a nation to take its place among civilized states before it has either gentlemen or scholars! They have in the course of twenty years acquired a distinct national character for low and lying knavery; and so well do they deserve it that no man ever had any dealings with them without having proofs of its truth

"There is now a probability that the damned junta of Cadiz will be crushed, and the colonial trade thrown open. I have no doubt that what you recommend America is looking to; but I have as little doubt that it is under the direction of Bonaparte, who keeps the American government in pay. They dream of conquering Canada on the one hand, and Mexico on the other; and happy would Bonaparte be if he could see them doing his work. But the more probable consequences of that war with this country into which he is bribing them would be the separation of the Northern States, and the loss of New Orleans, which it would be our first business to secure, and thus seal up the produce of the whole Western territory.

"You have plucked George Rose most unmercifully. Yet if I were asked what man in the House of Commons had done most good there, I should name this very hero, who, according to a song sung by his company of Christchurch volunteers to his praise, while he used to get drunk with them drinking alternately his own health and his wife's, is 'as brave as Alexander.' The encouragement of the benefit societies, the population and poor returns, and the naval schools, we owe to G. Rose. He has actually *done* more good than the whole gang of reformers have even proposed to do. The worst I know or think of Canning is that he seems to be laying out for popularity by showing symptoms of falling in with that party whose economy is injustice, and who never hold out any nobler object to the people than that of saving pounds, shillings, and pence.

"But I meant to confine myself merely to those passages which are either directly actionable, or which after a while you would yourself be sorry to have published. They are that about Croker, the recommendation to withhold supplies, the mention of Lord Chatham and Lord Riverdale, of Fellowes and Kett, and what is said of the Irish attorney-general. About Irish affairs the English can never be made to take any strong interest. I

\* See *ante*, pp. 35, 36; and pp. 67, 68.



should retain your parallel of Wellington with Peterborough to substitute as appendix. It would do good: for the great good which is now to be done is to keep up the spirit of the country. Thank God, England is not upon her stumps like Witherington; but we must fight on till we bring France into that condition.

"Your prose is as much your own as your poetry. There is a life and vigor in it to which I know no parallel. It has the poignancy of champagne, and the body of English October. Neither you nor Murray gave me any hint that the Commentary was yours, but I could not look into these pages without knowing that it could not be the work of any other man. God bless you. R. S."

How much wiser, of how much more prophetic view and with what unmistakable earnestness expressed, are the striking passages having relation to America in Landor's rejoinder, dated ten days later!

"I perceive that Murray is disposed to suppress the Commentary; whether for pay, or prejudice, or fear, I cannot tell. He did not advertise it in his catalogue as about to be published, though he received it in December, and the date of the catalogue is February.

"I never can be induced to believe that Madison is in the pay of Bonaparte, or that an American wants any pay to make him resent the indignities and privations he endures from our maritime laws. All parties are against us now. So tyrannical a system never existed; nor one which would so certainly throw America into a confederacy with France. Why could we not have revoked our orders in council, and left nothing to the French but her hatred and vengeance? On the contrary, we resolve to seize American vessels so long as Napoleon perseveres in his system; as if the Americans could alter it, as if they could hinder him from doing what he chooses to do on the Continent, or indeed had any right, if they could, provided he did renounce, which he has done publicly and effectually, all right to seize their property, even though searched by English ships, and even after many of their crews have been in English ports, and some on board of English ships of war. Whichever power was inclined to relax first from its pretensions was certain of conciliating the Americans, and of directing all their animosities against the power that persevered in its injustice. Napoleon saw this, and his pride and hatred yielded to his policy. I pray fervently to God that no part of America may be desolated; that her wildernesses may be the bowers and arbors of liberty; that the present restrictions on her commerce may have no other effect than to destroy the cursed trafficking and tricking which debases the brood worse than felonies and larcenies; and that nothing may divert their attention from their own immense neighborhood, or from the determination of helping to set free every town and village of their continent! To accomplish this end I would throw myself at the feet of Madison, and implore till I were hoarse with imploring him. I detest the American character as much as you do, and commerce as much as Bonaparte does; but a civil war (and ours would be one) is so detestable a thing as never to be countenanced or pardoned, unless as the only means of bringing a ferocious and perfidious tyrant to public justice. Nothing can be more animating than such a tiger-hunt as this, and even the peril itself is salutary. But the Americans speak our language; they read *Paradise Lost*; and their children, if fire and sword should not consume them, will indulge their mild and generous affections in *Kehama*. Surely there must be many still amongst them who retain, in all their purity, the principles that drove their

ancestors from this country. In my opinion one such family is worth all the turbulent slaves and nobles in the wilds of Poland, and all the thoughtless heads that are devoted for Fernando Settimo.

"I do believe with you that Franklin formed the American character as we now see it; but without him the people would never have been independent, at least not for many years. To destroy the power of one people over another is enough of itself to constitute a great man. I have heard, and give full credit to it, that an immense bribe was offered him by General Howe to use his influence in bringing back the people to merely their own proposals. I believe he sent the letter to Congress.

"Whatever you do, do not despise Locke. Remember he refused a pardon, because acceptance of pardon would appear as an acknowledgment of guilt. It must be a glorious principle which could make a man resolve to live in Holland when he might live in England. There are some errors in his reasoning; but he cleared away much lumber from philosophy, and his writings tend to promote the interests of genuine freedom and sound thinking.

"I am heartily glad that the prince has shaken off Grey and broken up the Foxite pack; but I could wish that Mr. Perceval would allow forty thousand Englishmen to fight for religion and loyalty in Spain, though neither the loyalty nor the religion is perfectly to my taste. The capitulation of Blake is detestable and most infamous. Twenty thousand could cut their way through any army on earth, provided that army was surrounding a vast city. But it appears that at first Suchet had not thirty thousand under him, so that the Spaniards could bring against him in any one point a much greater force than he could oppose. After all, the most advantageous way would perhaps be to fight from the houses and squares, where cavalry could not act, and where women and children, by throwing tiles from the roofs, would be as formidable as veterans. In Tarragona and Valencia, the Spaniards lost greatly more than two thirds of their effective force. Suchet in the capture of these two places has done more against them than all the other generals since the commencement of the war in the Peninsula. Bonaparte is the only general who has performed such signal exploits. I saw Carrol here (Bath). I believe he is now in London. I did not ask him what he came for; yet I thought he would be more useful in Spain. He is an active and good officer, but should abstain from other views and projects."

But before that letter was even posted Southey had been writing to confirm the suspicion with which it opened, that Mr. Murray had taken fright at the Commentary, and was anxious to be relieved from going on with it. Not having read it when he undertook its publication, he has since been reading it in the proofs, and now finds that its remarks on Mr. Canning would put him in so painful a position that he has appealed to Southey to get him out of the scrape.

"I have a letter this evening from Murray, which I would enclose to you if it were not for the time which would be lost in sending it round for a frank. The sum of it is that it would relieve his mind from some very natural and very unpleasant feelings if you would allow him to procure another publisher for this Commentary, into whose hands he will deliver it ready for publication, and with whom he will settle for you. This is purely a matter of feeling and not of fear. He is, on the score of the *Quarterly Review*, under obligations to Canning, and would on that account have refused to publish any personal attack upon him. The manuscript he never read, look-



ing forward to the perusal of the book as a pleasure. What he wishes will be no inconvenience to you, and no doubt you will readily assent to it. 'I confess,' he says, 'I hesitatingly propose this, for I fear even you could not now speak of this to the author in any way that would not offend him. I will, however, leave it entirely to you; and if you say nothing about it, I will publish it without any further trouble to you or Mr. L., however painful, from my peculiar situation, it will prove to me.' These are his words. For my own part I should feel any fear of giving offence as the only thing which could occasion it. It is but for you to signify your assent to Murray in a single line, and the business is settled without any injury to any person's feelings. That it is purely a matter of feeling with him I verily believe. The not reading the manuscript was a compliment to the author, and a mark of confidence in him."

Landon's reply deals not alone with the Commentary but with the Parallel (in which comparison of Wellington and Peterborough was made), and is a wonderfully characteristic production. Its date is March, 1812. "A plague on both your houses!" He is so disgusted with both factions, that, by way of grinding both into the dust, he means to lay out five thousand (borrowed) pounds in establishing a printing press at Llanthony! His other scheme of establishing Lord Wellington on the throne of Portugal one might suppose to have involved yet greater difficulty for so stanch a republican. But for the time no doubt he was hotly bent on both, and equally ready when the cool fit came to surrender either. Observe at the same time how large and just were his views on leading questions of civil liberty.

"My Parallel lies unfinished. It covers a good number of sheets; so many that I never shall have the heart to transcribe them; for I write not only on sands, but on such sands as are exposed to storms and tempests from every quarter of the heavens. When you come to Llanthony, which I hope and entreat you will this summer, I will show you what I have done, and help you to read the manuscript. I have lost one sheet or half-sheet, I cannot remember which; but it grieved me at the time, because it contained some very labored passages. I believe I threw it into the fire, thinking I had transcribed it afresh, as I had done with another page or two.

"My Commentary is condemned to eternal night. I have just written to Murray. One sentence in my letter to him will explain the whole.

"'Deceived or not deceived, the fault was not mine that you first undertook it yourself; that you next proposed to find another who would undertake it; and that at last you relapsed even from this alternative. I am not surprised that, in these circumstances, you find some vexation. Had you, in the beginning, pointed out such passages as you considered dangerous to publish (although this very danger would have shown the necessity of them), I would have given them another appearance and stationed them in another place.'

"I am convinced he has been persuaded, either by Canning or some other scoundrel whom I have piquetted in the work, to withdraw from the publication of it; although I have soaped all the bristles that could have been clutched by the foul hand of our attorney-general.

"At this time I am reading the Correspondence of Erasmus, 2,146 pages! How infinitely more freedom, as well as more learning, was there in those

days than in ours! yet establishments of every kind were in much greater danger of innovation.

"Two things are wanting. Perfect equality in all religionists as to their competency in civil employments, and an acknowledgment of the principle, *ne quid falsi dicere audeat, ne quid veri non audeat*. In fact, that there is no libel without falsehood. Unless these rights are admitted and established, I think it a matter of utter indifference who governs. I confess I care not how fast that system runs to ruin which opposes them.

"It is delightful to see how the Foxites have disabled themselves from serving the Regent. The people will be able to pay taxes two years more, and those fellows will then excite them to some expression of their discontent; they will force themselves into the places of government; they will govern with as much corruption and fraudulence as their predecessors; and as much timber will be wanted for gibbets as for fleets.

"I think we have thrown away a greater sum of money in vain than ever was expended before for any possible good. We have gained nothing but what it would have been better not to have gained, and the last vestiges of the constitution have totally disappeared. The senate of Rome did not impose so heavy a contribution on conquered Carthage as we pay every two years to our own senate, which strips us of everything that can make such subjection tolerable, and adds the grossest insult to the most insatiable extortion. The fear of Bonaparte keeps people quiet, as children are kept quiet by the name of some giant. I think of employing my time in proving that neither war nor ministers are formidable; that nothing is very much so but poverty, which strips us of all resistance when the enemy comes to close quarters; that this is the nearest and most urgent mischief; and that those who demand our money in every by-road and high-road of our lives are to be crushed at any peril, if we hope at any future time for comfort or security or peace.

"I am about to borrow five thousand pounds that I may establish a press for this purpose, and may have the glory, at much private loss, disquiet, and danger, of setting the public mind more erect, and throwing the two factions into the dust.

"I shall not cease to uphold the cause of Lord Wellington, and to recommend his establishment on the throne of Portugal; to revolutionize South America, which is a far more civilized country than any in Europe (as I myself know from conversing with both officers and soldiers who were natives), and which will otherwise be under the power of Bonaparte in another year. The people of South America are of a military origin, the descendants of brave and honorable men; they are uncontaminated by blackguard religions, and neither befooled by kings nor cowed by inquisitions. Their religion and all their other habits must perpetually remind them of their ancestors; and those men are always the best between whom and their forefathers no cloud or indistinctness intervenes. A North-American can see his only through the pillory: this is a very different view from that which is presented under the banners of Pizarro and Cortes. It must also be conceded that an Englishman does not lift his foot so high above the dirt as a Spaniard, and that he degenerates much sooner and much more."

To that letter Southey had much to say, and said it with the strangest possible mixture of his former and his present self, Jacobin and Anti-Jacobin. He has a view of the libel-law that might have satisfied Eldon himself; with a faith in republicanism (everywhere but in America) and a theory of colonial independence that the same



learned "Old Bags" would have treated as insanity. At the notion of setting up a printer's press, he is terrified in the extreme. Heaven forbid that Landor should draw on himself such vexations! Cold lead was more perilous than cold iron. If he would but bear in mind what the laws of libel were, he might say what he liked to the public with safety. "Of individuals all that ought to be might be said; of the state anything that did not evidently show the wish to overthrow it; and if he would but always be careful that the vehemence of his manner did not belie his intentions." One cannot but now remember nevertheless, that within a few months of this date Mr. Perry of the *Chronicle* had been dragged before the courts for copying a gentle sarcasm about the Prince of Wales becoming "nobly popular," and that Mr. Leigh Hunt and his brother were sent to Horsemonger Lane Jail exactly seven months later for calling the same high personage an Adonis of fifty.

Southey went on to say that he and Landor had the same end in view; they only differed as to means. He would on no account have Wellington king of Portugal; the good powers forefend he should wish it! What he of all things desired was that the tide of opinion should take a republican direction, "and the whole Peninsula form itself into a great federal commonwealth; the form of polity which seems the best attainable in our present state." Then very wisely he sums up his colonial policy thus: You must send out colonies, as a hive sends out swarms. Let them govern themselves. Protect them as long as they need protection. When that is necessary no longer, though the countries be then each different and independent, let the policy never be lost of remaining one people. Give the Briton who goes to you all privileges of a nation; let the colonist here be an Englishman when he lands. "In fifty years America would petition to be received back into the family."

Absurdly wrong as to that latter point, it is yet plain from the frequent recurrence of such passages in his letters that Southey had in his heart a more genuine republicanism than Landor, with whom it was often little more than an unreasoning hatred of kings. The illustration we have just seen the latter employ, that those men are always the best between whom and their forefathers no cloud or indistinctness intervenes, and that a North-American could see his only through the pillory, is not one that Southey would have used. He puts the matter in another way. In his opinion, the present letter went on to say, Landor rated the American Spaniards too highly, just as he overrated the Americans themselves. He asks his friend to read Cotton Mather's *History of New England*, of which the annals were told by succession, not of princes but preachers. Half the Anglo-Americans, in Southey's view, went over red-hot from the conventicle, the other half flagrant from Bridewell; and the *tertium quid* had the roguery of the one superinduced upon the hard vulgarity of the other!

After this, for two or three months, other than public subjects occupy the letters of both, and not until October are politics resumed. The interval had been marked by stirring events, of which the latest were Borodino and Moscow; and at the reverses of Napoleon's fortune Southey's exultation knew no bounds.

"Will Bonaparte leave his army as he did in Egypt, or stay with them and keep his Christmas at Moscow? A Lenten sort of Christmas it will prove. The Russians, like the Turks, are in a very insubduable state; their beards and their idolatry are in their favor. It is of prodigious consequence that they don't understand *parlez-vous*-ing; and it will take a Frenchman, popinjays as they all are, a long time before he can gabble in Russ. Huzza! fight on, my merry men all, must be our tune; and as long as we can keep out the white-livered Foxites at home, the cause of Europe will never be to be despaired of. Should they get the ascendancy, it would then indeed be time to turn Turk in despair."

Landor's reply is less exultant; his toleration of the English government, to the direction of which Lord Liverpool had succeeded on the murder of Perceval, and of which Castlereagh and Sidmouth were now the animating spirits, is very naturally not on the increase; and as to Bonaparte the view here expressed by him is in effect that which Hazlitt supported in later years with the same abuse of power arising from personal passion.

"I do not think with you about Bonaparte. I hate him; I execrate him; but I detest our own government worse. Genius, in a political sense, is the Salvator or the Redemptor mundi. Corruption is the Devil, — not the Satan of Milton, but the sheer mean-spirited creature of the Evangelists. As for the cause of Europe, which you say is never to be despaired of, the kings and governments are such fools and rascals that I wish from my soul Bonaparte may utterly extinguish all of them. I want to see some paring and burning. I can wait patiently for the fresh vegetation that will follow. I want to see Finland liberated. That remote people had made a greater progress in agriculture and civilization in thirty years than any in Europe, if, perhaps, we except the Scotch. Bonaparte will do an infinity of good; but I wish, when he has done it, he may be impaled. He forced the Emperor of Austria to act infamously towards Prussia; the King of Prussia to act infamously towards Austria; and the Emperor of Russia to act infamously to every power in Europe. Willingly should I sacrifice my fortune, my life, everything but my soul, to abolish kingship throughout the world. Men never can be honest or peaceable, God will never permit it, while they live under this most cursed idolatry.

"I am more and more convinced that Lord Wellington alone is able to unite such discordant nations as the Portuguese and Spanish. It requires but very little wisdom to govern well when a people knows that he who governs can enforce obedience. He would not permit any great demand for it. I have finished my book on this subject, and a part of it will probably light the candle when I seal this letter. It was at least as well written as anything of mine, and was enough to have raised me a host of enemies if I could have performed but the mere mechanical part of forcing it into day."

Immediately upon this followed the general election in which Lan-



der so far took part as to issue an address to the freeholders of Monmouthshire. He had declined, he said, himself to come forward ; but he hoped they would choose a better colleague for their old member than the brother of the lord-lieutenant, to whose family pretensions in the point of intellect he was the reverse of complimentary. "We often find throughout whole families," he wrote, "as lifeless an equality of mind and soul as the revolutionists of France would have established in rank and property. I trust we should be as unwilling to countenance the one as the other. Let us compassionate the evils we cannot alter, and remove the evils we can. Let us prove that the race of country gentlemen is not yet extinct, and that some one of this order can be found in the county of Monmouth whose character for probity and intelligence renders him worthy to be the colleague of Sir Charles Morgan." Another passage will show the view he took generally of public affairs, how closely he went to some of the main grievances, and how narrowly he missed the proper remedy. His strong opinion of the duty of the House of Commons to deal with the question of waste lands has already been seen ; and other allusions made by him may be explained by the fact that he was writing within a few weeks of the execution at York, in one day, of fourteen miserable men who had taken part in Luddite riots.

"We have seen a great number of prime-ministers since the beginning of the war, and, as far as the constitution is concerned, very little if any difference in their method, whatever there may have been in their maxims, of government. This consideration should reconcile all parties. Since we are engaged in a contest, which could not have been avoided with honor nor terminated with safety, I have always thought the most favorably of those who have acted with most firmness and energy. To support us in the expenditure that is necessary, two other things are necessary also : first, the abolition of useless offices and unmerited pensions ; secondly, the encouragement of agriculture and commerce. Englishmen will endure any privations for the glory of their country and the preservation of their liberties ; but they never will endure that the pittance of the brave should be thrown into the lap of the slothful. There are pensioners, each of whom receives from the country they never have benefited as large a sum annually as would raise a thousand industrious mechanics from want and dependency to competence and comfort. Yet it is from these mechanics that the country *was* rich and powerful ; and it is from these pensioners that she *is* exhausted and distressed. If their pension-money had been applied to the sustenance of our starving manufacturers by wise and liberal encouragements, what violations of peace and security, of law, of order, of the British character, what miseries and crimes, what oaths and perjuries, what robberies and murders, what imprisonments and chains and executions, might have been spared forever ! You will remember not many months since, at a time when among the laboring classes there was a wide scarcity and universal discontent, that a general act of enclosure was recommended by the united voice of several counties. Although the scarcity could not have been relieved by an act of which the effects were not immediate, yet many of its painful feelings would have been removed by a disposition to prevent its recurrence. Such an act would not only have

excited the industry of those useful men who wanted, in a greater degree than was ever known before, employment and subsistence, but it would have separated and diverted from mischief those turbulent spirits which were rising in the north. The only person in your grand jury who opposed a general act of enclosure, however, with the exception of the duke's steward, was the duke's brother. And though certain it is that the opinions of men so little distinguished for abilities or information must have proportionately little weight with the wise, yet equally certain is it that the wise do not constitute the majority of mankind, and that wealth and rank have a greater influence on the affairs of this world than knowledge or integrity."

The date of that address was October, 1812; the new Parliament, from which it had failed to exclude Lord Arthur Somerset, assembled in November; and two months later Landor was eagerly intent on bringing before it an enclosure bill of his own. Writing to Southey from Llanthony in the last days of January, 1813, he thus refers to it:—

"I remain here, not so much for pleasure as for business. I am bringing into Parliament a bill for enclosing these commons, which are now depastured by the sheep of no less than nine other parishes. Mine is perhaps the only manor in the world that is surrounded by so many. Persons of all descriptions have assumed to themselves the liberty of turning out their cattle here. Among the rest is one who has a peculiar enmity against me, both as an Englishman and a gentleman, though we never met; and this enmity is increased and exasperated by the necessity which he is aware that he lies under of showing his right, such as he has, of turning out cattle in a manor where he has no property. He has given notice that he intends to oppose my bill in Parliament, although I possess 95 in 112 of the land-tax; and he has raised the common people of other parishes against me. If you can procure me any assistance in Parliament, you will render me the greatest service, as all opposition is attended by grievous expense. If the public good were not about to be promoted, as well as my own, I would not ask one earthly being for support; but in the present state of things a few miserable sheep are infected by the scab, all improvement in the breed is discouraged, and the large half-starving flocks break into the enclosures and destroy the grass and corn of the farmer, and the garden and croft of the cottager. In case of enclosure, I shall plant above a million of trees on land which is now unproductive, and raise a very large flock of Spanish sheep, which at present can with great difficulty be kept from the contagion that eternally prevails here. The landlord I have mentioned is so base a man that he bought the cottage of a woman bowed down by poverty and age, for one guinea. It was worth thirty."

Southey did all he could for the bill, and there is a mention in his letter of the members he had written to about it;\* but, the opinion of his own county representatives being adverse, Landor had to aban-

\* One of Parr's letters has reference to the subject. "DEAR WALTER, — I will give you all the assistance in my power, when I have received your bill, and am informed by your solicitor about the time at which it is to be debated in the House. He must get the bill sent, as if to some member of Parliament at my house. I am very much pleased with your brother Charles. I tried to get him over to dinner, when I had two very learned visitors. But he could not come. I shall very soon ask him again, for he is a very sensible and a very well-mannered clergyman. Pray give my best compliments and best wishes to your lady, and believe me truly your friend, S. PARR."



don it early in the session. Even by that time, however, subjects of more engrossing interest had supervened; and what with his own troubles and Bonaparte's troubles he had more than enough to occupy him. The private disputes are reserved to another section; but what passed between Southey and himself during the eventful months that preceded the abdication at Fontainebleau will properly be added here.

In April, 1813, Landor notices a newspaper report of Austria joining the coalition against France. "Kings and emperors are such a detestable race of rascals, I mean the present families of them, that I can hope nothing from their coalition at all favorable to the happiness of mankind. Alexander seems beneficent by nature. At all events, the fewer Frenchmen there are in the world, the happier will the world be. There is no comfort or quiet for these gnats." In something of the same spirit Southey replies; \* saddened by private as well as public occurrences, and less eager than he had been a few months before for continuance of war with America. He was full of fear that the German campaigns might lead to a peace, being convinced that a peace leaving Bonaparte alive would be worse than war. Still, therefore, he hoped to see his destruction, and then peace might be lasting. But how disastrous was the outlook at home! His friend had been too true a prophet. "Our naval superiority stricken, the foundations of every establishment undermined, and the dragon's teeth sown all around us."

"I suspected that the Americans must have made some improvements in gunnery, and it was a relief to my heart when I learnt that this was actually the case. They stuff their wadding with bullets, — which accounts for the carnage on board our ships, — and they make their cartridges of very fine sheet-lead, so that it is not necessary to sponge the guns; thus they fire nearly two to one, almost doubling their force. I fear I shall not see you this year. Remember me to Mrs. Landor. God bless you."

Happily for himself, however, he recovered spirits as the year went on; for the laureateship fell to him in the autumn, and it would never have done to open in less cheery strain than he did, rejoicing in the gift and exulting in the return he was able to make for it.

"In happy hour doth he receive  
The Laurel, meed of famous bards of yore,  
Which Dryden and diviner Spenser wore, —  
In happy hour; and well may he rejoice,  
Whose earliest task must be  
To raise the exultant hymn for Victory!"

The letter in which Southey told his friend all about his appointment — how Croker had applied on his behalf to the prince, who promised it to him; how Lords Liverpool and Hertford had meanwhile offered it to Scott, who waived it handsomely in his favor; and how, in

\* In the same letter, I may mention, he tells him of the failure and collapse of the scheme of the *Edinburgh Register*, from which he had expected so much. See *ante*, pp. 145, 214.

taking it, he had neither fear of the newspaper jokesmiths nor distrust of his own power to make the office respectable — was written immediately upon his return to Keswick, after a five-and-forty hours' mail-coach journey from London in the middle of November, 1813; and was acknowledged by Landor in the same month from Swansea, with hearty congratulations on finding at the least so much honesty and discernment displayed by the men in power. "I never thought that a place gave honor to any one, or that any one gave honor to a place; but there is something equally agreeable both to the reasonable and the romantic mind in reflecting that in war and in poetry, the elements of ardent souls, the first men of our country fill the first station."

The interest in the great war tragedy was meanwhile thickening fast, and the catastrophe was rapidly approaching. The battle of Leipsic had been fought in October, and before the end of the year Germany was free. Then, at the opening of the next momentous year, came out Southey's first laureate effort, the *Carmen Triumphale*; and Landor, whom business had taken to London at the time, was hoping also to sustain the feeling against France by a series of letters in the *Courier* with the signature of Calvus. "You have seen," Southey writes to his brother,\* "Calvus's last letter in the *Courier*. Landor is the writer. I entirely agree with him that this is the time for undoing the mischief done by the peace of Utrecht. France was then made too strong for the repose of Europe, and she ought now to be stript of Alsace, Lorraine, and Franche-Comté."

Of these letters Landor had told Southey immediately on his return from London in the first days of February, 1814:—

"The *Carmen Triumphale* was sounding in my ears all the way as I returned. I wish from my soul that this most admirable ode could (but too surely it cannot) be translated into every language, and chanted in every church, of Christendom, and that the notes were affixed to the door of every town hall. I too had been employing some midnight hours to prove that

'Justice must go before,  
And Retribution must make plain the way'; †

but the evil genius to whom I committed the manuscript has printed what he chose and omitted all the best. I hope he has, however, executed one

\* *Letters*, II. 351.

† These lines are from the last stanza of the Ode: a spirit-stirring one undoubtedly, and such as might justify still the uses of a poet-laureateship, if anything, even Tennyson's genius, could do it.

"When shall the dove go forth? O, when  
Shall peace return among the sons of men?  
Hasten, benignant Heaven, the blessed day!  
Justice must go before,  
And Retribution must make plain the way;  
Force must be crushed by Force,  
The power of evil by the power of good,  
Ere order bless the suffering world once more,  
Or peace return again.  
Hold then right on in your auspicious course.  
Ye princes and ye people, hold right on!  
Your task not yet is done:  
Pursue the blow — ye know your foe —  
Complete the happy work so well begun."



order of mine, in sending to your bookseller the *Letters of Calvus*. The best he declines to print. I have written a most complete refutation of Sir James Mackintosh's speech. Scorn forbids me to ask the fellow whether he has received it. Let it perish. What think you of Lord Castlereagh visiting the scoundrel Caulincourt? The *Courier* published one out of three parts of my reply to the impudent paper of Bonaparte."

But already Southey had heard of the *Calvus* through Coleridge, then also writing in the *Courier*; and in his next letter, every way a characteristic one, asks if Landor had seen what he had himself been writing in the same paper, *Who calls for peace at this momentous hour?* an ode that had grown out of the castrations of the *Carmen Triumphale*, whose official character had precluded entire freedom of speech. For five years, Southey continued, he had been preaching the necessity of declaring Bonaparte under the ban of human nature; and if this had been done in 1805, even the Emperor of Austria, "wretch as he is," could never have given him his daughter in marriage. Now his hope was that the other "wretch" might require terms of peace that the allies would not consent to. Not that he wanted the Bourbons restored. Except when expulsions had been effected by foreign force, restorations were bad things. The Bourbons had been a detestable race, and adversity had failed to restore in them the virtues royalty had stifled. It was an old notion of his that the Revolution would not have done its work till the houses both of Austria and Bourbon were destroyed; and he proceeds to tell Landor a story of Hofer, which he had himself heard from Adair to whom the facts were known, to the effect that when that gallant man had actually succeeded in getting himself into an Austrian prison for safety, he was deliberately turned out of his asylum by the Austrian government. If any member of that government, therefore, escaped the sword or the halter, there would be a lack of justice in this world, "which will require some expense of brimstone in the next to balance the account. The fact is one of the most damnable in human history."

Eager and prompt was Landor's reply:—

"I have indeed seen, or rather heard, that trumpet-tongued ode, beginning,

‘ Who calls for peace at this momentous hour ’;

and I smile at this moment when I find you calling it ‘ from the castrations ’ of the *Carmen Triumphale*. Those of old Saturn, falling on the sea, produced a Venus. These, falling on an island, will, I hope, produce a Minerva. I, and my friends the dogs, can never forget the honors you have bestowed on Whitefoot;\* but I am afraid they will be followed up by some irreverence from our critics. They like to pick a bone with their betters.

"I often wonder at myself, and it is the only occasion on which self-complacency falls in with my wonder, to find your sentiments and mine so very similar both in poetry and politics. On Spenser alone we differ totally. You will find in the letters of Calvus as deep a hatred of the Austrian court

\* See *ante*, p. 161.

as could be expressed in them; and your anecdote of its conduct to the excellent Hofer makes me yearn from my soul for its destruction. No family that ever existed in the world was ever so ungrateful, not even the Stuarts. A scoundrel of an emperor held a long debate in what manner he should receive John Sobieski, who had just saved him from being an assistant to the black eunuch, after the proper initiation. It was determined that he could not, according to etiquette, shake hands with him, much less embrace him. Instead of returning any thanks for the salvation of the capital, he enlarged on the benefits his ancestors had conferred on Poland. Sobieski said he felt happy that Poland had been able in some measure to return them. How scandalously was the Duke of Marlborough stripped of his petty principality of Mendelheim! and what an ungrateful — was Maria Theresa! Bonaparte now sees that his vanity alone has been his ruin. As a politician he should have left no king or emperor of the old race, except in Russia. If he had only destroyed the house of Austria, he might have soon, but not immediately, restored the kingdom of Poland in his own family, with all Prussia Proper. He might then have played off the Russians against the Turks, or the Turks against the Russians, and in either case would have had the Persians for his allies or his dependants. By this train of policy, which however was broken at the first link, he would have ruined us in the East Indies."

There is something in that view of the case undoubtedly; but on the whole it is singular and not satisfying to observe how little of what we now should think the true moral of the momentous events then passing was extracted from them by two such near lookers-on as these famous correspondents. What the mere politicians of the time might be forgiven for dropping out of account can hardly be excused to Landor or to Southey. Men of such activity of intellect, familiar with ancient and with modern history, and who had so clear an understanding of what the French Revolution involved, might surely also have been expected more clearly to see that so decisive an outbreak of democracy would have to run its natural course; that the principles embodied and represented by Bonaparte would survive his repression and abuse of them; and that the curtain about to fall on him would have to be uplifted again for them.

Two more passages from Southey's letters immediately following the last from Landor, and too curious to be lost altogether, are all that can here be given. The date of the first is after the news of the fatal affair of Bergen-op-Zoom.

"As for the Dutch, their torpor at this time is such that they deserve, according to the old punster's curse, to be undammed in this world, and damned in the next. Yet I was struck the other day in reading George Gascoigne's poems to come to a passage which added one to the many striking points of comparison between their war of deliverance and that of the Spaniards. He speaks of them just in the same contemptuous manner as the Spaniards are spoken of by almost all who have served with them:—

' They be but hollow gear,  
As weak as wind which with one puff up goeth;  
And yet they brag, and think they have no fear,  
Because Harlem hath hitherto held out,  
Although indeed (as they have suffered Spain)  
The end thereof even now doth rest in doubt.' "



Then, in May, 1814, when Bonaparte had left for Elba, when Wellington had been created a duke, and when Louis the Eighteenth had taken possession of the Tuileries, Southey thus wrote : —

“So the curtain has fallen after a tragedy of five-and-twenty years! In two respects the catastrophe is as it should be. Bonaparte's degradation is complete. Even his military reputation is lost, and he is suffered to live more because he may safely be despised than because of his Austrian marriage. And the French in baseness and impudence have contrived to outdo their former masterpieces in this kind. Amiable people! they have been rather the victims of the tyrant than his agents! Then the patriotism of the rascals! The municipality can no longer reconcile it to their consciences to keep silence! Wretches! If Bonaparte's last order concerning his good city of Paris had been executed, I could with little difficulty have brought myself to believe that the powder could not have been more fitly expended.”

But before that letter reached its destination Landor had quitted England ; and the causes that led to his departure will appear in my resumption of the narrative of his residence at Llanthony.

## XI. PRIVATE DISPUTES.

In the early months of 1813 Landor reminded Southey that the year had come which, according to his promise, was to be that of his second visit to Llanthony. Since his and Mrs. Southey's first visit there had been many improvements as to comfort ; a truth of which he would not find much difficulty in persuading her. Could he also persuade her to make the trial? His house, which had been built for a bachelor, and would be enlarged next year by an addition of four good bedrooms, had two large ones already, and several smaller ; and the best had the advantage which Italian architects laid great stress upon, — they were *al mezzo giorno*. He could insure them well-aired beds, and his horses should meet them anywhere and at any time.

Southey hesitated, doubted if he could make the time suitable, desired it too much to drop it altogether, and was still entertaining it as not impossible, when, within three weeks of the former, a second letter reached him. It opened ominously, for already Southey had sufficient experience of his friend to know that any new literary enterprise was not unlikely to foreshadow some fresh personal vexation ; the one being commonly used as a safety-valve or escape from the other. “I have,” this letter began, “written a comedy, and shall send it within a few days to your booksellers for you. This, in my opinion, may be acted. There is a prefatory discourse by the editor, much in the style of our great editors on the other side of the Tweed.” But the personal vexation, of which here was the sure forerunner, carried with it in this case a special annoyance to Southey himself ; for the letter opening thus lightly passed into tragical utterance in the very next line, as it conveyed the terrible announcement

that with the tenant he had himself introduced — the “agriculturist” of whom so many letters had been written, the supposed man of capital to whom the best farm of Llanthony had been let on terms extravagantly liberal, the real man of destiny pre-selected to be a plague and torment to both friends — Landor was now plunged over head and ears in disputes of an irreconcilable bitterness, and to which the only possible issue must be hopeless and irretrievable loss.

“I am under no small tribulation from that Betham of whose family you know something. Hearing a good account of his father from you, and that he was desirous of settling here, I offered the old gentleman my two livings here, worth about £270 a year, on the decease of the present incumbents, who are each above seventy. That the son might have a comfortable house and a large farm, I consented to accept the resignation of a lease from an excellent tenant, and to allow him £50 a year for it, which £50 however Mr. Betham was to pay me, — the old tenant thinking my security better than his. Mr. B. neglected to gather in his corn, of which the crop was excellent, and lost at least £200 by this; he did not thatch his hay, by which he lost £200 more; and by a series of such conduct as might be expected from a sailor turned farmer, and by living at the rate of £1,000 a year, he has succeeded in spending his wife’s fortune, — about £3,000. In fifteen months I have received no rent from him, though his rent amounts to above £1,100. I did not demand it the *first* half-year, however much I wanted it; and that he might not pay it the *second* he lopped my trees, and ploughed all the meadow-ground on one farm. In the midst of this last transaction I wrote civilly to him, telling him that I presumed it was by mistake, and requesting that it might be discontinued. He replied that he should not be hampered in what he considered for the good of the farm, and ‘besides, that I had promised him every indulgence.’ In fact, I had never refused him any request, however unreasonable. To prevent my other meadows from being ruined, which would render the estate quite undesirable to any future tenant, I have (as he foresaw and wished) brought an action against him, but expressed at the same time a readiness to settle it by arbitration. This he refused; and refuses also to pay any rent, under pretext that the matters in dispute will be settled in a court of law.

“Although for several months he came uninvited and passed his evenings in my house, although his sheep have consumed the produce of my garden and fields and woods, he has had the baseness to threaten to shoot my *chickens* if they come into his fields. I mention this to show the extreme baseness to which he descends. I offered to put his hedges in repair, if he would keep them so: he declined it, finding it more convenient to pasture his sheep in my meadows, and turning them into bare fallows that they may be forced upon my land by hunger.

“I have mentioned only a few instances of this fellow’s roguery and ingratitude; but enough for you to judge of him. All his brothers — three certainly — have abandoned every visible means of procuring an honest livelihood, and are with him; although his poor laborers are starving, and he has actually borrowed money from them. In fact, he thinks it more reputable to be convicted of roguery than suspected of poverty. He has embezzled the money I allowed for the repairs of the house, because I insisted on no written agreement and relied on his honor. He has discharged me and my gamekeeper from shooting on his farm!”

Making allowance for hardly avoidable partiality in stating one’s



own case, there will appear to have been evidence to support every count in this indictment, as well as others to be preferred hereafter. Southey's ominous remark upon Betham's ignorance of agriculture will be recollected ; his previous employments having in fact been those of usher in his father's school, and afterwards of petty officer in an India Company's ship. But it was not the character of the man only, but, as appears from this letter, all the surroundings of the man, that marked him out for the part he had to play. It was one of his sisters, as before we have seen, who induced Southey to recommend him. The old gentleman his father, as we here observe, was the origin of Landor's first troubles with him. Nor could a non-paying tenant present himself to a luckless landlord under conditions more aggravating than those of giving bed and board to a quarter of a dozen idle brothers who had "abandoned every other visible means of procuring an honest livelihood." Does it not all confirm what has been said of destiny in the matter, and connect with it, after the manner of the Greeks, the offender's whole helpless family? "I forgot to tell you," wrote Charles Lamb to Landor nearly twenty years later in an unpublished letter now lying before me, "I knew all your Welsh annoyancers, the measureless Bethams. I knew a quarter of a mile of them. Seventeen brothers and sixteen sisters, as they appear to me in memory. There was one of them that used to fix his long legs on my fender, and tell a story of a shark, every night, endless, immortal. How have I grudged the salt-sea ravener not having had his gorge of him! The shortest of the daughters measured five foot eleven without her shoes. Well, some day we may confer about them. But they were tall. Surely I have discovered the longitude—" Of course the hero of the shark was Landor's chief tormentor. He had been in the East and in the West Indies ; and, for the sake of the whole family of sharks he was to bring up to have their gorge of Landor, the salt-sea ravener had spared him.

Southey's answer was written in the midst of family distress. His wife's brother had come to them on a visit, had been suddenly attacked by illness which proved fatal a few days before the date of his letter, and had left everything dismal and comfortless around them. But bitter beyond all was his grief and surprise at Betham's conduct. Personally he knew little of him, and never meant to recommend him ; but the man certainly had come of a good stock, and if he had not himself implicitly believed in his honor and honesty he would never in an evil hour have directed him to the Vale of Ewyas. It was very strange, but misgivings about him, though not affecting his honesty, had occurred a few months ago. He had sent over to Keswick last summer from Abergavenny a very vulgar fellow with letters of introduction ; and this had given Southey a bad opinion of his taste in companions.

Southey then talks of the *Charitable Dowager*. He supposes the heroine to have been drawn from the life, and thinks that as a drama

there was a want of incident, and, in that on which the catastrophe depends, of probability; but he had found the dialogue abounding with those felicities that flashed from Landor in prose and verse more than from any other writer. He remembered nothing but Jeremy Taylor that at all resembled them. Jeremy had things as perfect and touching in their kind, — but a different kind: the same beauty, the same exquisite fitness: but not the point and poignancy displayed in the Comedy and the Commentary, or the condensation and strength that characterized *Gebir* and *Count Julian*. He goes on then to notice certain neighborly compliments bestowed in the comedy on the town and townsfolk of Abergavenny; and in proof that some good nevertheless might come out of Wales besides flannel and lamb's-wool stockings, instances a book he has been lately reading on Eastern history by a Major Price. He adds that in three weeks he is going to London, and that he has given up the *Edinburgh Register* with the fourth volume, having got into bad hands with it, and being in a fair way of being defrauded; but he does not regret the transaction on the whole. Scott owed him a good turn for that indifferent one, and the laureateship now hung within his reach.

From Llanthony, Landor answered in August: upon the personal points first, and after on the comedy. Nothing can be wittier than his attack on the old method of comedy writing, nothing more ingenious than the simpler mode he prefers; but it may be feared that his chances were not greater in the *Dowager* than they formerly were in *Count Julian* of carrying a theatreful of patient listeners along with him.

"There are two things in your letter which grieve me; yet perhaps there are hardly any two things that have wider openings for consolation. Mrs. Southey will be unhappy at losing her brother, from the great gentleness and pure affections of her nature. You will enter into all these, and come to your own at last. My habits have been more dissipated, and my heart more hardened, than yours could have been by any accidents or occurrences of life; yet nothing can happen to the five or six people I love, whether it be by death or loss of any kind, but I must devise some reasons for them why they must not be unhappy. If you continue the History, I hope and believe there will be little to regret, ultimately, in your abandonment of the *Edinburgh Register*. You have been defrauded; it cannot be of anything which you may not recover by the same means as you acquired it. I have also been defrauded, and have no means whatever of replacing what I have lost.

"Betham told Addis, my tenant and a very honest man, that he should pay me no rent at all events for four years. Here is between four and five thousand pounds gone by trusting to his honor. I suffered by the same infatuation before. I cannot bring myself to be comforted by Ovid, whose sentences are full of poetry and wisdom, and are his greatest excellence.

'Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est:  
Quæ venit indigno pœna, dolenda venit.'

"I wish to improve my comedy, and to have it acted. The acting I never thought of; but Juan Santos de Murieta, a poor man of Castro who received



me hospitably when I found Bilbao in occupation of the French, is perhaps ruined by those barbarians. I see no speedier way, little speed as there is in this, of sending him some money. If some dashing and adventurous bookseller would give me £ 100, or £ 50, or £ 30 for all I can ever get by the comedy and the preface, — which is, I think, a humorous specimen of modern editorship, — he might recover as much by the mere acting. But not unless you will suggest some improvement in the plan. I never could keep to any plan of my own. I *am* romantic, and I am in eternal dread of being absurd. This has often thrown a chill over me, and closed the petals of my fairest flowers. I will add a portion of the Preface, in which I defend, in the character of Harcastle, my own manner. The editor says: —

“It is far from a hasty or a slight production; yet the plot, one would imagine, is too simple for the times. Harcastle has preferred truth to surprise, and character to everything: for, although the follies and vices he satirizes are general enough, still the persons in whom they are represented are choice individuals of their kind. Intricacy of plot was always considered necessary, and the more so when delicacy was not: it was however so difficult to make the audience keep watch and ward for it, and to command an uninterrupted attention for five whole acts, that many of the best writers, from Terence to the present times, have combined two entire plots, hoping, as our author expresses it, ‘that what is twisted together will untwist together, and leaving a great deal to the goodness of providence and to the faith and charity of their fellow-creatures. Your intricate plotters bring many great changes into many whole families, and sometimes into several and distant countries, within the day; and what is more difficult and incredible, send off all parties well satisfied. For my own share,’ he proceeds, ‘I am contented with seeing any one fault wittily rebuked and checked effectually; and think *that* surprising enough, considering the time, without the formation of attachments, the begetting or finding of children, bickerings, buffets, deaths, marriages, distresses; wealth, poverty; wealth again, love again, whims and suspicions, shaking heads and shaking hands. All these things are natural; but one would rather breathe between them, and perhaps would think it no bad husbandry to put some of them off to another time. The combination of them, after all, marvellous as it appears, is less difficult to contrive than to credit. I have been an idle man and have read or attended the greater part of the plays that are extant, and will venture to affirm that there are barely a dozen plots amongst them, comic or tragic: so that it is evidently an easier matter to run over the usual variations than to keep entirely in another tune and raise no recollections. Both in tragedies and comedies the changes are pretty similar, and nearly in the same places. You perceive the turns and windings of the road a mile before you, and know exactly the precipice down which the hero or heroine must fall: you can discover with your naked eye who does the mischief and who affords the help; where the assassin bursts out with the dagger, and where the old gentleman shakes the crab-stick over the shoulder of his dissolute nephew. I do not admire these direction-posts to perplexities and intrigues; I oppose this agrarian law, this general-enclosure act: I would not attempt to square the circle of poetry, and am avowedly a nonjuror to the doctrine of grace and predestination in the drama.’ Of the *Charitable Dowager* he says: ‘One action leads to and brings about one event, naturally but not necessarily: the action is vicious, the event is desirable, and is accompanied by the chastisement of the evil-doer, whose machinations are the sole means of accomplishing what their motions seem calculated to thwart and overthrow. No character is introduced that does not tend towards the development of the plot, or does not manifest the bent and inclination of the principals: no one is merely a prompter to a witticism, or gentleman-usher to a repartee. Characters in general are made subservient to the plot: here the plot is made subservient to the characters: all these are real. I have only invited them to meet, and bestowed on them those abilities for conversation without which a comedy might be very *natural*, but would not possess the *nature* of a comedy. I wanted to expose the very few peculiarities I have exposed. I could not bring them together in another way. Any one may compose a more artificial piece; but whoever could make the present one more complex, preserving its regularity, its consistency, its truth of character, can do more than I can. I should lose myself in attempting it; I should lose also whatever I might carry about with me to prove that I am I. Perhaps I should be more like others; but I should be more visibly their inferior.’”

“What is your opinion of my giving acts the name of scenes, and scenes

of acts; and my reasonings on that head in the letter of Hardcastle to his cousin Leonard Dusset, — which I forgot to date,

‘From my lodgings at the Bath, this 14th of January, 1687.’”

To which may be added a further fragment, found among his papers, from this much-cherished “editorial” or Hardcastle preface; pursuing his laugh against the bookmaking of which the principal scene then was Edinburgh, and the chief promoter Scott, in whose life may still be read the melancholy page of it disclosing the story of his commercial partnership with Constable and the Ballantynes. That ill-fated parted partnership began some three or four years before this date; since then had followed in rapid succession a series of printing and bookselling ventures of which every one is now known to have been a disastrous failure; and in the present year there had appeared those letters of Miss Seward which even Scott was ashamed to have helped in putting forth. Landor, on the other hand, was never very tolerant of the publishing “craft,” protested all his life (in my judgment properly) against such offices of editing as consisted simply in collecting indiscriminately the worst as well as the best productions of a famous writer, and swelling out even these by needless annotation; and his present humorous attack represented something more than his personal resentment of the mention of himself in the Seward book.\* All the jest has perished now; but these two fragments may tell us with what avidity it was followed at the time, and how little, while the humor of it lasted, Landor is likely to have cared for, or given any proper consideration to, the troubles and losses now darkly closing in upon him.

#### “MOTTO FOR THE COMEDY.

Nunc adeo, si ob eam rem vobis mea vita invisâ, Æschine, est,  
Quia non justa, injusta, prorsus omnia omnino obsequor;  
Missa facio: effundite, emite, facite quod vobis lubet.

TERENT. *Adelph. circ. finem.*

#### PREFATORY DISCOURSE.

Διὰ τοῦτ' ἄρ' αὐτοῦ καὶ κάλ' ἦν τὰ δράματα·  
Ὅμοια μὲν ποιεῖν ἀνάγκη τῇ φύσει.

Ἄριστοφ. *Θεσμοφοριάζουσai.*

Non lo conobbe il mondo mentre l' ebbe.

PETRARCH.

“The editor of the *Charitable Dowager* has waited a considerable time in the hope of obtaining two able coadjutors in the departments of annotator and antiquary: for the public is not to be informed, ‘at this time of day,’ that the office of editing a work is far more difficult and delicate than the mere labor of writing one. Under which conviction men of the most lively genius have toiled through glossaries and archives, with great punctuality and good faith. A few words indeed have slipped inadvertently into their commonplace books, — such words however as the most morose of the original writers would willingly resign. With this exception, they have taken nothing; satisfied with the more honorable reward that the

\* See *ante*, p. 68.



booksellers have promptly and prodigally bestowed. Every author who can be clearly proved to have failed in business by no imprudence in his ventures of wit and no launching out in his expenditure of learning, hath all his books and papers given back, which, although to him perhaps the memories of little but misfortune, may excite the industry or curiosity of others: those works also of the more prosperous, which their modesty or their indifference threw away, have been presented to them again, in the same letter and binding, as their most cherished offspring. Our maxim hath been, *If you take Isaac, you shall take Esau: let each have his blessing.* . . . Letters of state, of love, of enmity, are edited in many instances by some ingenious and celebrated hand, assisted by those literary friends who are most conversant on the different topics. And he hath taken care, for the consistency and character of the writer, that no asperity shall be softened, no rash assertion recalled, no error of any kind corrected; resolved that the features of the dead shall not be relaxed by death, and that the passions of the living shall not be irritated by any whom their resentments can reach.\* . . . Returning to the comedy before us, the reader for the present must regret the volume of notes which at a time perhaps not distant will be appended. Such only can be afforded to this first volume as are requisite to elucidate the editor. Nor has it been thought necessary in a preliminary discourse to discuss whether the author were a privy councillor or a puisne judge. One of the name, a Humphrey Hardcastle, was certainly a puisne judge; but there is reason to suppose it was either the father or son of our comic writer. On a more minute inquiry made by my learned friend Archibald Stokes, Esq., of the King's Mews, in the journals of the Privy Council, for which distinguished body I take this opportunity of expressing my esteem and veneration, it hath been discovered that our author was not actually a privy councillor, but was only brought before, and interrogated by, that illustrious assembly: not, as it would appear, for any actual misdemeanor, but because those unsettled times required" — [*Cetera desunt.*]

To the Llanthony letter Southey did not immediately reply, being now in London on the laureate business; from this date (October, 1813) to the May following the Llanthony disputes assumed their most serious form, and involved the most disastrous consequences; yet this is exactly the interval when, judging from Landor's letters to his friend, not his own but the public affairs and not his law-pleas but his Latin poems, we might suppose to be receiving his exclusive attention. Assuming that the letter above named had not reached Southey, or that he had not leisure to answer so many things at once, he selects the thing as to which his needs are most pressing. "I really do wish that my comedy should be both printed and acted. You alone are capable of giving me any advice that I am likely to follow in altering the plot. A comedy must have some bustle; a tragedy should have none. The passions will permit no movements but their own, — they should be painted naked, like heroes and gods. If I can make my comedy worth ten pounds, I will send the money to an honest and generous man named Juan Santos de Mureta, whose property was destroyed by the French at Castro. He received me

\* "See the letters of Miss Anna Seward, in which her consistency is put upon as firm a foundation as her judgment, her genius, or her chastity."

there most hospitably when, on my return from the frigate which poor Atkins\* commanded, I found that the enemy had entered Bilbao." His friend would observe that he had lowered his hopes from a hundred pounds to ten; but seriously he did not at present believe he could, by any exertion, write anything for which a bookseller might safely exceed the amount he here mentioned.

Nor had that letter been despatched many days before he wrote again to say that he had been finishing an old scrap of Latin poetry as usual. "Finishing! as usual!—no, continuing and altering; then either losing it or lighting a taper with it to seal a letter. Here are a few lines that will give you some idea of the present work. I have written about two hundred." And the letter closes with forty-three closely transcribed lines of the poem of *Corythus*.†

Southey meanwhile had been writing with some misgivings about the comedy. He began his letter by saying that when in London he had been asked whether he was the author of *Count Julian*: a question implying a great compliment to him and small discernment in the questioner. To his own thinking Landor's notion of tragedy was perhaps too severe; yet he believed that his friend could write one, that even in representation might succeed, more easily than he could a comedy; and very certainly he would find it easier to write a new comedy altogether, than to introduce action and bustle into a plan constructed without them. That was his verdict, expressed with all delicacy, on the *Dowager*. Yet had he found in the dialogue of it a peculiar character easier to feel than to analyze. Landor's prose was like his verse; everywhere terse, condensed, and full of thought; and with flashes of which the thought and the expression were so apt, so happy, and so original, that he knew not where they were to be paralleled, or where anything approaching them was to be found. *Corythus* he had also read with immense satisfaction: and he reminds Landor of a scheme formerly mentioned by him‡ of publishing a selection of modern Latin poems with criticisms; urging him now to carry it out, showing how suitable it would be to public schools and universities, and expressing himself sanguine of its success.

To all this however there is not even allusion in the next of Landor's letters, nor does the *Dowager* herself appear again! Occupation upon his Latin verse absorbs him once more, and everything else is as though it had not been. In the pleasure of any new composition past disappointments were always as quickly forgotten as even present pains and disquietudes. "Valpy the printer," he now wrote to tell Southey, "the greatest of all coxcombs, very much wished to print my Latin poems; but I have an intention to print them at Oxford, under the title of *Idyllia Heroun atque Heroidum*, in a size like the sixpenny books of children. It will cost me £ 35; and I intend to

\* See *ante*, p. 137.

† It is the fifth of the *Idyllia Heroica* in *Poemata et Inscriptiones*, pp. 19-32. And see *Hellenics*, pp. 174-186.

‡ *Ante*, pp. 132, 133.



give whatever they sell for, which may amount to about half the money, to the poor of Leipzig. If I had finished or preserved my *Polyxena*, it would be perhaps the best. At present they consist of, 1. *Corythus, sive Mors Paridis atque Enones*. 2. *Dryope*. 3. *Pan et Pitys*. 4. *Coresus et Calliroë*. 5. *Helena, ad Pudoris Aram*. I have published nothing that will bear a moment's comparison with *Corythus*. My head rises to the shoulder of Robert Smith, and every other of the modern Latin poets is below my knee. Such are my dreams. What poet would tell his as frankly? or to whom else could I tell mine?" And he winds up with forty-six more lines of *Corythus*.

Yet at this very time the most critical hour of his fortune had come. Out of his great dispute with Betham had sprung sundry minor differences, not merely with people who took Betham's part, but with others having small interest in the tenant but some dislike of the landlord. A state of things had arrived when any one ill-disposed to the master of Llanthony had means of annoyance at hand which not a few were ready to use. Among them were magistrates, clerical and lay, with the old grand-jury grudge against him; small farmers with rents overdue, who fancied they saw advantage to themselves in his disadvantage; laborers to whom honest work was hateful, but eager for any amount of labor that was vicious or mischievous; and (not least though last) attorneys sharp enough to turn to bitterness every hasty act or ill-considered word. Landor's chief pride, his plantations, supplied generally the ground of attack. His trees were uprooted, and his timber stolen; and upon the rare occasions when offenders were caught, sympathizing magistrates admitted them to bail. Against one desperate fellow he had to swear that he was in personal danger; but though the magistrate who first heard the case directed the man's committal, ten pounds were subsequently thought bail sufficient to justify his release.\* This fellow soon after drank himself to death at Abergavenny; and by the Mr. P. whose acquaintance has before been made by the reader,† Landor was accused of having caused his death: but the accuser was acquitted when Landor prose-

\* To the magistrate who accepted the bail, Mr. Richard Lewis, of Llandilo, Landor wrote: "The threats were not such as any one who cared for me could hear without alarm. It was the conversation of the parish that he had resolved to murder me. My wife, who heard this repeatedly from the servants, the tenants, and the workmen, was afraid to leave the house even for exercise. To quiet her alarms I at last swore the peace against him. That my own are not liable to be quite so easily excited, I am ready to prove before any man who has at once the baseness to traduce me; the impudence to affront me, and the spirit to meet me. I really do think, however, that the hazard of my life is worth more than the hazard of ten pounds." The closing sentences of the letter are too good to be lost: "Let me entreat of you, sir, to reconsider your conduct. I do not look for any acknowledgment of error; such is made only by ingenuous and well-regulated minds, and requires a degree of magnanimity to which self-importance and self-delusion are strangers. But I do hope, if not for your credit and reputation, at least for your comfort and repose, that you will never in future court a transient popularity with the ignorant and the wicked at the expense of that lasting peace of mind which a conscientious discharge of your duties will impart, — at a period of life, too, when such feelings are most requisite, and such rewards most welcome."

† In the letter to Baron Thompson, *ante*, p. 204.

cuted him for slander. On the other hand, when one of Betham's brothers had been overheard to threaten that certain trees alleged to have been planted disadvantageously to his brother's farm should be removed, and Landor posted the fact in a handbill charging him by name as meditating felony and offering reward for his apprehension, the threatener recovered damages against Landor for libel. Another of the brothers with sporting tastes had taken up with congenial associates, of whom the most prominent was a notorious poacher, son of the keeper of the village alehouse; and this party, according to Landor, "with dogs of all descriptions and as many guns as they could procure, sported over several of my farms, destroyed my game, and dined upon it at the alehouse afterwards." Out of this arose a third lawsuit, which ended in an apology; and when, for the fourth time, Landor went into the court-house at Abergavenny to give evidence against a man upon trial for stealing property belonging to him, he protested that if he had been the thief in the dock he could not have been treated worse than he was in the witness-box by the cross-examining counsel.

Of some of these and other kindred matters, apart from the graver suit in progress against the elder Betham, Southey appears to have inquired with great concern upon reading a paragraph in one of the Bristol papers. "I burst into a loud fit of laughter," was Landor's reply, "at hearing that I was likely to be made an outlaw. One Moseley, who had broken all the principal restrictions of his lease, and had even taken up and sold to one Fredericks of Crickhowel the new quick fences of his farm, moved me to pity by the number and greatness of his family; and instead of recovering two or three hundred pounds damages, I gave that sum for his resignation. Descury had bought oats, &c., and even all his stock, at double the value. Near four years afterwards, during all which time his family wanted bread, he is persuaded by some of his friends to bring in a bill against me of £18, although every bill was always paid instantly, and although a settlement was made for all demands on his quitting the estate. I received an impertinent note from Hugh Jones, his attorney at Abergavenny, in reply to which I stated the circumstances as above, and the utter improbability that I could be in his debt, or that so poor a man could permit it for such a length of time. The same Jones had incited a poacher to take a false oath against me, as the poacher declared to my servants in the presence of two respectable tenants. I reminded him of all this, and treated him as he deserved. He brought a criminal action against me. The grand jury of course brought in a true bill. Yet the fellow was ashamed, and proposed to accommodate the matter by the intervention of two arbiters. They decided that I should write an apology for what was unlawful, and prescribed the form. He afterwards refused to comply with their decision, which was contained in the form, and which stated that, the offence being of a private nature,



the apology should not be made public. I shall be cited to take my trial at Monmouth; and as I certainly shall not appear, I shall be outlawed. That is the meaning of the paragraph. Again, a fellow of most notoriously bad character who has been tried for more than one crime, a fellow who collects the window-tax, was the friend of one Toombes who took a farm of me of £ 300 a year and never paid one farthing, but ran away and lived at Abergavenny, where he killed himself by drinking brandy; and that tax-collecting fellow, merely to insult me, took occasion to come up to me and inquire aloud of a person with whom he was walking whether I was the person who murdered poor Toombes. He then followed me into the office of my attorney Mr. Gabb, and on my demanding of him whether he asked that question of *me*, he said, 'Yes,' and that his friend had answered in the affirmative. Well, I brought my action, as the magistrate, Mr. Powell, recommended. The jury were unanimously of opinion that he asked only for the sake of information, and found him not guilty. You perceive what chance I have of justice, and how subject I am both to robbery and insult. When the materials of my house were stolen, and when the thief ran away from the constable and hid (in a ditch) the wood which the constable was making him carry as evidence of his theft, I was treated by Mr. Taunton, his counsel, with much more violence than any criminal. Our laws protect none but the guilty. I would not encounter the rudeness I experienced from this Taunton to save all the property I possess. I have however chastised him in my Latin poetry now in the press. I heard accidentally, from Mr. Hawkins of Pembroke College, a little anecdote which shall not be very soon forgotten of this fellow Taunton."

That was his comfort, and not an inconsiderable one. He chastised Taunton (afterwards the judge) in Latin poetry, and, what was more to the purpose, in such English as Swift might have written.\* Many are the passages in the "Epistle to a Barrister" worthy still of preservation, and now to be read, by such as have read the foregoing, with a proper understanding of their sarcasm and wit.

"Two badger eyes has Themis; one  
Is always leering toward the throne;  
The other wanders this way, that way,  
But sees the gap and leaves the gateway.

My sheep are flayed; the flayer bears  
The best of names, our vicar swears.  
And why reproach the mild divine?  
He loves his flock, his flock loves mine.  
My timber stolen, could I know  
The mark I made a month ago?  
My barns cleared out; my house burnt down;  
Could the whole loss exceed a crown?  
Shame! are such trifles worth my cares?  
I'm freed from rats and from repairs!

\* For a specimen of the Latin verse the reader may be referred to some Iambics "Ad Causidicum," in the *Poemata et Inscriptiones*, p. 180.

A year is past: I beg my rent:  
*I must mistake — that was not meant.*  
 I tarry on: two years elapse:  
*The balance may be theirs perhaps.*  
 For insolent requests like these,  
 Their gentle hands uproot my trees;  
 While those, they told me hurt their grain,  
 I fell, their gentle hands detain. . . .  
 Of late a sort of suitor there is  
 Who courts a horsewhip like an heiress.  
 Kick him . . . not Midas would enrich  
 With surer stroke the flaccid breech;  
 The blow above reiterate . . .  
 A broken head's a good estate;  
 Add *Swindler* . . . and behold, next minute  
 He's out of jail, and you are in it!"

Nor less terse and whimsical are the lines descriptive of Welsh witnesses and magistrates; the "Dick Loose" being the Mr. Richard Lewis of Llandilo, who liberated on bail the man whom another magistrate had committed for threats of personal violence.

"The land that rears sure-footed ponies  
 Rears surer-footed testimonies,  
 And every neighbor, stanch and true,  
 Swears, and *Got pless her!* what will do.  
 Exclaim '*A perjury!*' and *you libel* . . .  
 Each his own way may use his Bible,  
 Else how is ours a freeborn nation,  
 Or wherefor was the Reformation?  
 If you demand your debts, beware,  
 But, robbed, cry '*Robbers!*' if you dare;  
 You only lost a farm of late,  
 Stir, and you pay your whole estate:  
 Expose their villanies, Dick Loose  
 Will shudder at the gross abuse,  
 Free them from prison on their bail,  
 And pledge them in his mellowest ale.

Here all but Innocence may trust,  
 And all find Justice but the Just."

Landor had left Llanthony and was in his house in Bath when the action of libel which Mr. Frederick Betham had brought for the hand-bill was decided against him: and thereupon, in graver mood than that which had suggested the poetical attack on Mr. Taunton, he addressed a letter to the plaintiff's counsel Mr. Jervis (afterwards the chief justice), by whose unscrupulous attack upon himself the case had mainly been decided; and from whom he hoped by this means to elicit an expression of regret for the language he had used, failing which he told him he should consider him as a calumniator in whatever spot upon the earth they might meet, except in the courts mis-called of justice "where calumny is sanctioned by custom, and insolence has the protection of the laws." From this letter, which he printed, a few brief passages will tell whatever else may need to be told of these painful matters; and it is only just to my old friend that I should preface them with the manuscript note appended to the copy of the printed letter transmitted to Southey, who made himself in



consequence some inquiry into the case, and, friendly as he still continued with several of the family of the Bethams, declared himself satisfied that these averments were true.

In the course of the letter to Mr. Jervis it is stated that no landlord had ever acted with greater kindness than he had done to the family which had so wronged him; and it was to that remark the note following was made for Southey.

"I thought it better to omit the numerous instances I had brought to my recollection, as the statement of grievances was long enough without any statement of ingratitude.

"1. I had given £200 for ornamenting the house *beyond* what I engaged for.

"2. I allowed timber for ploughs, carts, wagons, sheep-folds, &c., also beyond my engagement.

"3. I gave a cottage and nearly an acre of land, to be added to the farm without rent, which cottage he offered for sale as his freehold.

"4. I offered *another* and a *greater* quantity of land to facilitate the exchange of part of a field with a tenant of the manor, that some draining might be done at less expense.

"5. He had so little sense of delicacy as to apply repeatedly to my gardener to have my garden of between two and three acres. To accommodate him, I consented to exchange it, together with a nursery which he also wanted, for a less quantity of ground, above two hundred feet higher and much more exposed; and as it was impossible to remove the trees from the nursery at that season of the year, and he expressed a strong desire to have the garden, I gave it up to him, and accepted no compensation whatsoever. I did not accept, nor did he ask me, any of the small quantity of land which was to be exchanged for it, until I could also give up the nursery. Yet he has the inconceivable baseness to state to the Court of Exchequer that I did not fulfil my agreement with him in this particular!

"6. On hearing that the father was likely to occupy one of the farms, I offered him the next presentation to two livings. He never thanked me! On my asking whether he was likely to reside in the parish, he coolly replied, 'he believed he was as well where he was.' I had afterwards reason to be of the same opinion. He admired a small picture at my house of trifling value, and I gave it to him. He promised to send me a book he had written on the Baronetage of England, but forgot it. No differences at that time existed between his son and me, nor until several months afterwards. Mr. Lisle Bowles tells me of a letter which he wrote to the late Marquis of Lansdowne, in which he strongly urges his subscription to the Baronetage book with some cogent reasons for it from the character of the minister his father."

From the letter itself few extracts will suffice. Making all allowance for vivacity of statement, they give so startling a picture of what the life in these latter days at Llanthony must have been, that but for what formerly has been said of the practical withdrawal of justice from the district, and of the condition of the lower orders of Welsh at that time, it might seem wholly incredible. Landor describes the annoyances practised against him on system by the Bethams.

"It was customary for this person, whom it appears I have so traduced and disparaged, to stand upon a gate-post, with his brother, for the purpose of looking into my dining-room, and when I walked out, to thrust some *notice* into my hands or face: this he did in the presence of Mrs. Landor, after following us through our pleasure-grounds. He and some other of the most disorderly people in the parish surrounded the house after ten o'clock at night on such pretences, and some one attempted to force open the door. On another occasion he aimed a bayonet at the wife of my gamekeeper. In consequence of these proceedings, which were varied every day, neither I nor my family could reside any longer in the country. On the purchase and improvement of Llanthony I had laid out between sixty and seventy thousand pounds, and I employed for many years from twenty to thirty laborers in building and planting. I have planted and fenced half a million of trees: a million more are lost to the country by driving me from it. I may speak of *their* utility, if I must not mention my own."

A subsequent passage supplies further illustration:—

"I had planted a great number of stocks for orchard; they were of large size, and brought from Hereford at considerable expense: he promised to preserve them,—they are all ruined! I had planted many ornamental trees near the Abbey; the fences were broken down at night, and my keeper forbidden to replace them! I collected together some of the hewn and ornamental stones belonging to the Abbey; the Bethams came into my court-yard, and threw them into the road they were making. They took down a saw-pit on the waste ground opposite their house, which had been used in common by the tenants of the estate from beyond the memory of man; they threw my timber into the road, and placed the posts of the saw-pit in direct view of my drawing-room and library windows, for the purpose, as they expressed themselves, of annoying me; and they passed no inconsiderable portion of their time in looking through my windows from this place, which was within eighty yards."

Southey had professed little hope of Betham's farming from the first, but he declared himself not less dismayed than his friend at the picture here presented of it.

"The one who rents under me told me on his first coming that he intended to lay out a capital of from £4,000 to £5,000 on the farm; but he told Francis Robbins a few weeks afterwards that if he had £4,000 he never would be a farmer. He promised to introduce the Suffolk husbandry, with an intelligent bailiff; and for the sake of this example, I consented to let him a farm within a few pounds of £1,000 per annum. He broke his promises to his bailiff, whom he induced to come into Monmouthshire with his wife and child, and who threatened soon afterwards, as many others have done for want of their wages being paid to them month after month, to come upon the parish. An old miller, a very industrious and honest man, was obliged to compromise or starve, and he had to consent to take a part only of the money for which he was engaged: others, when they applied for money, were referred to the devil with their wives and families, while these brothers had their two bottles of wine upon the table. As for the Suffolk system of agriculture, wheat was sown upon the last of May, and cabbages for winter food were planted in August or September."



To these may be added the passage in which Landor stated his excuses for the act which the law had pronounced to be a libel.

"I considered the rooting up of my trees as a felony. I did not know that threatening to root them up lessened the crime, when a threat to injure any one, in general, is thought to aggravate it. It was the opinion of Mr. Phillimore that this Betham should be prosecuted for a felony under the Black Act, and the Rev. Mr. Davies, of Court-y-gollen, a most intelligent and upright magistrate, declared that he would commit him whenever I could bring forth witnesses of the fact. If I erred in my opinion as to the extent of the crime, I erred in common both with a most discreet and excellent magistrate, and with a most dispassionate and learned counsellor. Yet you have had the insolence to declare in a court of justice that I acted unlike a man of honor and a gentleman. Was it not natural that a man who had planted more than half a million of trees, and who had double that number ready to plant, should take the most prompt and efficacious measures to detect and expose so wanton and criminal a destroyer? When you assert that I condescended to become a bill-sticker, you again assert an untruth. The crime committed by Frederick Betham was distinguished from a felony by a very slight shade of difference: the error on my part was an error in law only, or rather in the nomenclature of law. No court could even have taken cognizance of it, if the word *felony* had not been prefixed to the offer of reward."

But the most impressive point made in the letter was at its close, when Landor, to illustrate the veracity of a statement of his adversaries that so far from having any claim upon them, he was actually in their debt, described dryly and without comment the result of the action for rent which he had brought against his defaulting tenant. "The Court of Exchequer has overruled the whole of their exceptions, dissolved the injunction, and awarded to me every farthing of my demand, to the amount of one thousand nine hundred and sixty-eight pounds seventeen shillings and sixpence."

Such indeed was the decision of the Exchequer upon the leading matter in dispute. All the lesser differences sprang out of it, the life at Llanthony had been embittered and broken up by it, and now one of the highest courts of the realm declared Landor's claim to be just. But the help this might have given opportunely came now too late. As he bitterly said on receiving it, "The laws that permit a man to be deprived of his property for two years may restore it to him when it is worthless, — but better order him at once to be starved in an iron cage." The delays which his adversary had been permitted to interpose, and the facilities afforded him even after this verdict to intercept its immediate operation, were fatal to Landor. He had already quitted Llanthony, and was now making preparation to depart from England.

## XII. DEPARTURE FROM ENGLAND.

In the middle of May, 1814, Landor had taken the resolution to quit England, and on the 16th he communicated his intention to

Southey. Writing from Swansea, he told him that two conditions would regulate the exact time of his going. When Mr. Jervis had made up his mind whether or not to notice his letter; and when the Oxford printers should have finished his Latin poems, of which the profits (if there should happen to be any) were to go to the sufferers of Leipzig; he would remove from his country forever.

His intention and its motive will be best described by himself: "I must borrow at fifteen per cent by annuity, as I have no other means, my estate being settled; and my property is worth £ 200 a year less, even if I get these fellows out. I expect to lose at least £ 2,000, besides the £ 200 a year and law expenses; for they have squandered away whatever they had by marriage or otherwise. The sister has told innumerable falsehoods to Lady Beddingfield and others, but I trust the decree of the Court of Exchequer will sufficiently expose the principal one. I pray to God I may see you before I go abroad. I remain here ten days. I spend three weeks with my mother, part at Warwick, part at Ipsley Court near Redditch; or, if the weather continues so cold as it is, all the time at Warwick. After that, I go to France. I am trying to sell my life interest in the Llanthony estate. If I get £ 30,000 I shall be contented. The purchaser, for about £ 3,000 more, might buy up the lifeholds, and make a clear income of £ 3,000 per annum."

Southey had not replied to these painful tidings when the Weymouth post of the 27th May took him Landor's last letter from England, and with it more startling announcements. "Every hope of meeting you again in England has vanished. Pardon me if this is only the second of my wishes. My first is, that I may become by degrees indifferent to this country. The Court of Exchequer has decided in my favor; but Betham has been able to promise bail and a replevy, so that the ends of justice are defeated. Nearly three years' rent will be due before I can receive one farthing from him; and all my timber is spoiled. I shall be utterly ruined. Not being able to pay the interest of £ 10,000 debt on the Llanthony estate, the mortgagee will instantly seize on it until he has paid himself the whole of the principal. The laws of England are made entirely for the protection of guilt. A creditor could imprison me for twenty pounds, while a man who owes me two thousand, and keeps me from the possession of two thousand more, can convert wealth and affluence into poverty and distress,—can, in short, drive me forever from my native country, and riot with impunity on the ruins of my estate. I had promised my mother to visit her. I never can hope to see her again. She is seventy-two, and her sorrow at my overwhelming and most unmerited misfortunes will too surely shorten her days. My wife, when she married, little thought she should leave all her friends to live in obscurity and perhaps in want. For my sake she refused one of the largest fortunes that any private gentleman possesses, and another person of distinguished rank. Who-



ever comes near me is either unhappy or ungrateful. There is no act of forbearance or of kindness which Betham did not receive from me. His father saw, and knew perfectly, that his farming must ruin him. Yet, instead of persuading him to resign it, he sent the remainder of his family to live with him, and to countenance him in all his violence and roguery. I go to-morrow to St. Malo. In what part of France I shall end my days, I know not, but there I shall end them; and God grant that I may end them speedily, and so as to leave as little sorrow as possible to my friends. No time will alter my regard and veneration for you: nor shall anything lessen the kind sentiments you entertain for me. It is a great privilege to hold the hearts of the virtuous. If men in general knew how great it is, could they ever consent to abandon it? I am alone here. My wife follows me when I have found a place fit for her reception. Adieu."

To the first of these letters Southey, sending at the same time the close of the MSS. of *Roderick*, had replied before the second reached him, earnestly dissuading from the project of selling Llanthony, and advising that his friend should go abroad for a time only: not as an emigrant, but as a guest or stranger. "A few years might be pleasantly passed on the Continent, while your property is vested in England; but not if you went with a purpose of not returning. My own intention is to take my family abroad at the expiration of the first term of my lease if I can compass the means. The difference of living will probably balance the expense of the journey, and my young ones will pick up languages while I enjoy a genial climate. But a few years, a very few, would suffice: for the older we grow the dearer those old times become which time has spared. I grant there is vexation enough in our laws; but take it for all in all, there is no country in which a man lives with so little annoyance from the government." The rest of the letter was about *Roderick* and the death of Danvers: "One of my oldest and dearest friends, at whose lodgings I first saw you. I loved him with my whole heart, and scarcely any loss could have wounded me so deeply."

But though Southey wrote only one day later than his friend had last written to him, Landor was already gone. Two brief notes will tell their own story.

#### ROBERT LANDOR TO SOUTHEY.

"SIR, — It is proper to inform you that two letters intended for my brother, with the Keswick postmark, are lying at Warwick. We are not aware that he has any other correspondent in that neighborhood besides yourself. You will pardon me if it should be otherwise. My brother was indeed expected at Warwick. He is in France. I feel no hesitation in communicating what we are anxious to conceal from every other person, that he left this country under circumstances the most perplexing to his family, and with feelings the most unhappy for himself. We cannot forward the letters in question be-

cause we are ignorant of every other particular relating to him excepting his arrival. Hitherto we have waited in the expectation that we might hear from him and learn his address. We do not return the letters because we are by no means certain that they are from you, and because we still hope that they may be sent to France shortly. It is right however that you should learn why they have not been answered, and that you should have the power to determine in what manner we shall dispose of them. I am, sir, with the greatest sincerity and respect, your obedient servant, ROBERT E. LANDOR.

“Warwick, Monday, June 27, 1814.”

#### SOUTHEY TO ROBERT LANDOR.

“Keswick, 4th July, 1814.

“SIR, — The letters concerning which you have done me the favor to write are from me. They contain parts of a long poem which I used to take pleasure in transcribing for your brother's perusal, and some attempts at dissuading him from a resolution which he had communicated to me of quitting England forever. A few days after they were despatched I received a letter from him from Weymouth, explaining the causes of his departure in a manner which I sincerely hope the natural warmth of his mind has made him overcharge. The whole affair has given me great uneasiness, and the more because I cannot but feel that I have been, very innocently, instrumental in it, having been the means of introducing Betham to him. May I request you to inform me of his address as soon as you are acquainted with it. I am, sir, with great respect, your obedient humble servant, ROBERT SOUTHEY.”

What happened in the interval of nearly three months before Southey again knew anything of his friend, it is not strictly incumbent on me here to tell; but no pain can be caused by the brief description I shall give of it, and there are points of character involved that it may not be right to omit. Yet even so much reference to it will not be easy. Disagreements between husband and wife are very delicate to the touch; and I have the example to encourage or deter me of the biographer of one of Landor's brother poets, who laid it down as an established truth that a man of the highest order of genius must in the unavoidable nature of things quarrel with his wife.\* That however is hardly my view, and the facts will not carry off my hero so handsomely. It is rather to show that genius has no immunity from the conditions on which all kinds of happiness rest, that domestic differences springing solely from faults of temper are the subject of passing mention here.

Landor had gone first to Jersey; and while staying at this place, where he was joined immediately by Mrs. Landor and one of her sisters, the expressed intention of taking up permanent abode in France led to frequent disagreement. The one, having made up his mind, could not bear that the matter should be talked of; the other, having equally made up her mind, could talk of nothing else; and “A pleasant sort of thing truly, that you are never to be contra-

\* Moore's *Life of Byron*, *passim*.



dicted!" was the usual and only reply to entreaties, repeated again and again, that she would not drive him to distraction. The usual charges and retorts succeeded; the harsher followed the lighter word; what, even while it provoked, had been attractive, became provoking without the attractiveness; and at last, in the presence of the sister, such allusion was made to the difference of years between them as Landor interpreted into deliberate insult, and resolved thereupon to leave her. He was up at four o'clock the next morning, and before midday, having walked to the other part of the island, was sailing on board an oyster-boat for France. From Tours, on the 2d of October, he wrote and told Southey what had happened. He was ignorant then that his wife's elder sister had already written to acquaint him with his wife's extreme grief and very serious illness; but this is the subject of his next letter to his friend, written at the opening of 1815, in which he says that it had at once banished from his mind all traces of resentment, and that he had written instantly to comfort and console her. As soon as her health and the weather admitted of her joining him, he added, he was to meet her in England, where he should stay only two days; and his closing assurance that Southey would receive his Latin poems in a fortnight has amusing confirmation in what one of his brothers soon afterwards wrote to his mother about this unhappy domestic dispute: "When we supposed him to be so miserable at Tours after parting with his wife, he was busy about a long Latin poem on the Death of Ulysses!"

The reader will now understand the allusions to the incident in the extracts that follow from letters to Southey.

TOURS: OCTOBER 2, 1814: A DOMESTIC QUARREL.

"How many sad events have crowded into a life already full and overflowing with them, between the writing and the arrival of your letter! My brain seems to be heaving on an ocean of fire when I attempt to recollect what I would say. Julia had long shown a disinclination to quit this country, and hardly a day elapsed without some expression, more or less energetic, of her sentiments. I subdued my temper, — the worst beyond comparison that ever man was cursed with, — remembering the rank and fortune she had refused for my sake, and the content and moderation she had always preserved in the midst of privacy and seclusion. We had passed above a month at Jersey, and in another day were about to sail for France. Her little sister was with us." [The circumstances of the quarrel are then described: arising from an ordinary dispute, but imbittered by the language which Mrs. Landor is alleged to have permitted herself to employ.] "All these things, with a thousand variations, both of anger and mockery, and all of them turning upon what she declared to have been her own fault in marrying such an old man, made her little sister burst into tears. Julia told her not to be such a fool as to cry; that if *she* cried, it certainly should not be about me. I endured all this a full hour and a half without a syllable of reply; but every kind and tender sentiment was rooted up from my heart forever. . . . No woman could or ought to live with

a man by whom such language was merited: nor could any man support life with a woman from whom it fell undeserved. I remained broad awake, as I firmly believe, and yet I had a succession of dreams, rapid, incoherent, and involuntary. I rose at four. I walked to the other part of the island, and embarked alone, on board of an oyster-boat, for France. It was this very day month. I am resolved to see her no more. I wish to have only £160 a year for myself. It is enough. I have neither wife nor family, nor house nor home, nor pursuit nor occupation. Every man alive will blame me; many will calumniate me; and all will cherish and rejoice in the calumny. This is natural on all occasions, but more so here; for who will believe that, where there are such smiles and spirits, there can be such an itch for tormenting, such rudeness, such contradiction and obstinacy? All that were not unjust to me before will be made unjust to me by her. A thousand times have I implored her not to drive me to distraction; to be contented if I acknowledged myself in the wrong; to permit me to be at once of her opinion, and not to think a conversation incomplete without a quarrel. The usual reply was, 'A pleasant sort of thing truly, that you are never to be contradicted!' As if it were extraordinary and strange that one should wish to avoid it. She never was aware that more can be said in one minute than can be forgotten in a lifetime. For the sake of exercising her ingenuity and of improving my temper, she will cause me to die among strangers and probably in a madhouse. She gave me my first headache, which every irritation renews. It is an affection of the brain only, and it announces to me that my end will be the most miserable and the most humiliating. I wish I could acquire all the heartless profligacy of this people, — that I could be anything, good or bad, dead or alive, but what I am."

## CLOSE OF SAME LETTER.

"Never shall I spend so delightful an evening as when we met at the house of poor Mr. Danvers. I called on him twice, but never saw him afterwards. I shall think of his death many hours this night, and envy it many in future. There is in the first of your letters — for both have reached me together and but this morning — something that raises my hopes and gives me a glimpse of comfort: the idea that you will one day come into France. Do not forget to tell me in your next when is the expiration of the lease. The climate here is delicious. I cannot say much for either the town or country, which many travellers have admired. There is not one great or shady tree within view, even from the towers of the cathedral, and the river is full of sand-banks. These, and the poplars, give a sad paleness to the scene, which is covered too with square white walls and ragged vineyards. Vines are sometimes pretty enough; but a vineyard is always ugly, I think, unless when it hides the nakedness of a hill destitute of form and grandeur. I live in a tower, with a large and shady garden, where I intend to be buried, if I die here. Adieu. May you enjoy all happiness, — as much as I have lost! or rather as much as I fancied I had found!"

GRATEFUL FOR THE SYMPATHY OF SOUTHEY: TOURS, NOVEMBER 4, 1814.

"There is more kindness in one sentence of your letter than I have received from all quarters of the world from my birth to the present hour. I have often thought of your happiness, and enjoyed a portion of it in the thought itself; but the tempest that drove me into France prohibits my return, and the halcyons will never make their nests on the seas that I must traverse."



## THREATENED WITH OUTLAWRY : SAME PLACE AND DATE.

"I can lose nothing by outlawry. Whoever chooses to take any part of my property can only do what he could do before with the same impunity. I am told that all my woods and plantations are laid waste; three hundred thousand trees are lost, — but not to me; nor have I room for any more vexations. It is not improbable that in the spring I shall go into the north of Italy, for this place begins to be infested with English: they reckon near two hundred. But if ever you come on the Continent, I will come near you; it will make me wiser, better, and happier. I do not believe that any lake in the universe is equal to yours. I wait some attainable image of it. I shall see the lake di Como; but I shall never say on its banks, as Catullus did,

‘O quid solutis est beatius curis  
Cum mens onus reponit.’ ”

## RECONCILIATION : TOURS, JANUARY 23, 1815.

"Not long after I received your last letter, I received one from the sister of my wife, dated so early as the middle of September. It acquainted me with her extreme grief, and of an illness which threatened to be fatal. This banished from my mind all traces of resentment, and I wrote instantly to comfort and console her. My own fear is, that I shall never be able to keep my promise in its full extent, to forgive humiliating and insulting language. Certainly I shall never be so happy as I was before; that is beyond all question. If there is a pleasure in pardoning, there is a proportionate pain in doubting whether we possess the power. Julia has not yet recovered her health entirely, but expresses a wish to join me. Whenever the weather is a little milder, I shall meet her in England, where I shall not remain longer than two days."

## THE LATIN POEMS : SAME PLACE AND DATE.

"You will receive my Latin poems in about a fortnight. I took extreme care, as I fancied, to correct the press: yet I discover, in a copy just now sent me, some odious and most stupid misprints. I cannot help thinking that the fellow has employed a blockhead to correct the press after me for the sake of greater security. Happily they are of such a nature that the most malevolent cannot attribute them to me. There are not less than six or eight.

"I have addressed one of my Latin poems to you: —

Quo vetus asseruit laurea vate decus  
Nempe chorus primam tibi, Suthei, detulit omnis,  
Invidiæque angues pectore vulsit amor.

I have hazarded, or rather more than hazarded, a lie in the last line; but it is the province of eloquence, in all kinds, to say *non quod sit, sed quod deceat esse*. The concluding verses of this short piece contain a thought which I afterwards paraphrased: —

Mild is the parting year, and sweet  
The odor of the falling spray;  
Life passes on more rudely fleet,  
And balmless is its closing day."

## DEDICATION OF THE LATIN POEMS TO PARR : SAME PLACE AND DATE.

"I have dedicated the volume to Parr, in a very short dedication; that is, about four pages of fourteen or sixteen lines each. I mention his hospi-

talities and kindness of heart as my reason. There is also another. People attempted to persuade him — for he is credulous — that I wrote a satirical poem on him and his acquaintance.\* The appearance of this satire gave me great uneasiness . . . and I could only assure Parr that I never lost my respect or my regard for him; that I owed to him a great deal of what I knew; and that I had spent some of my most joyous hours at Hatton. If you had not mentioned to me that the poem was attributed to —, I should perhaps have closed my lips on the subject, even to you; though there is a difference between communicating a fact and divulging a secret. Parr believed me instantly. Strange inconsistency! to fancy that I could be guilty of exposing a friend to ridicule, yet to reject all suspicion that I could utter a falsehood. As if the latter were the greater baseness! Of all the others that came under the lash, Greathead is the only one I would have exempted. He is fantastical, conceited, and pompous; but he is good-humored and beneficent. In my opinion the foibles of such a character should not be dwelt upon. It will not do to pretend that the attack is made purely against bad taste. The worst taste of all resides in that busybody rashness which knocks off the noses of the charities in its alacrity to sweep the cobweb. The weather here is so bitterly cold that the archbishop can no longer amuse himself among the little girls of Paris, and the weathercock of the cathedral is too slippery for the jackdaws. Adieu."

To that letter Southey replied on the 5th of February, loud in pleasure at the reconciliation, and encouraging his friend not to doubt but that he would be able to keep his promise, and be the happier for keeping it. He bids him also not forget that Tours holds the grave of Ronsard, who would have been a great poet if he had had not been a Frenchman. "But poetry of the higher order is as impossible in that curst language as it is in Chinese." For himself he is climbing trees in the Hesperides still; and though not without the graver feelings uttered in Landor's quatrain,† he is convinced they will both be the better for believing that the decline of life has also delights of its own, autumnal odors and sunset hues. The letter closes with the hope that they may meet somewhere on the Continent before another autumn is gone: but not many weeks were gone before the hope began to look desperate, and Napoleon was again in the Tuileries when Landor replied. Nevertheless this had found him prepared. War or no war, he would not return to the country that had cast him out, by refusing to his property the protection of its laws. He thought Bonaparte's government not unlikely now to last, and he had obtained leave from it to continue resident in France. That it was not his intention to return to England, and

\* This is noticed *ante*, pp. 194, 195. I subjoin an allusion to Parr from another of Landor's letters of this date. "He treated me with all the kindness I could have wished in a father, and invited me to live in his house. Yet we never quite agreed on politics. I was the only person who could, without bringing down a tempest on his head, attack his friend Fox."

† Which appeared in his collected poems with this addition: —

"I wait its close, I court its gloom,  
But mourn that never must there fall  
Or on my breast or on my tomb  
The tear that would have soothed it all."



that he had every disposition to prefer the empire to the government it had so suddenly displaced, he told his friend in this letter.

RETURN OF NAPOLEON : TOURS, 8TH MAY, 1815.

"An Englishman is returning, who will convey a letter from me, an opportunity which perhaps may not occur again for some years. I have applied to Fouché for permission to remain in France, and he has granted it. Whether our countrymen in general will be molested or not depends, I presume, in great measure on the future conduct of our government. I should rather have said, of *your* government; for with me they have nothing more to do than to despoil me of my property to support their stupendous folly. What has happened was quite certain to happen from the beginning. Can anything be more clear than the prediction of Calvus? \* The alienation, or rather the perfect indifference of the people, arose from a paper in the *Journal des Débats* on the possibility of renewing the tithes. The *Journal des Débats* was perhaps the best-written paper that ever appeared in Europe, and was devoted to the old monarchy. It was read in every coffee-house. Now certainly a government which could permit, without disavowing it formally and by proclamation, so horrible a report to spread and propagate, deserves annihilation. All the oppressions France ever suffered are light in comparison with tithes. Where they already exist, purchasers and proprietors of land endure them as known contingencies, as bad air, as the dry-rot, &c. But who, when he had repaired his house, would permit any man to infect it again with either the one or the other? The French laws, if they are observed, are incomparably better than ours, which are calculated only for the rich and the crafty. A man in France cannot be ruined by pursuing his rights. In England he unquestionably may. This reduces the debatable ground to an inch in extent, and proves my assertion at once."

Two more months however again unsettled everything, and greatly weakened in Landor the desire to continue a French citizen.

\* See *ante*, pp. 230, 231.

## BOOK FOURTH.

1815-1821. *ÆT.* 40-46.

### FIRST SIX YEARS IN ITALY: AT COMO, PISA, AND PISTOIA.

- I. From Tours to Milan. — II. At Como. — III. At Pisa. — IV. At Pistoia. — V. Again at Pisa. — VI. On the Way to Florence. — VII. — Retrospect and Prospect: a new Literary Undertaking.

#### I. FROM TOURS TO MILAN.

THE intention of remaining in France survived Waterloo but a little while, and with the second Bourbon restoration Landor resolved upon quitting Tours. But any return to England being for the present impossible, he now thought of Italy for his home.

What had been his homes in Llanthony and Bath were now no longer his. His personal property had been sold in both places, and the management of his real estate had been taken out of his hands. It was a sad time. The Llanthony vision was over. No more possibility now of what once had been his dream, to rebuild the abbey as a princely mansion; no more chance of seeing in its plantations the two or three million trees which with a desperate fidelity his fancy and his hopes had made almost real; and though his new roads were to survive him as they do even yet, too surely had the doom already been pronounced against whatever else he would have associated with his name at Llanthony. Before his house had well been inhabited his new trustees had ordered it to be taken down; but a few months earlier a flood had carried away the bridge he built; and whatever beside he valued had as ruthlessly since been swept away by a public sale. "I have here in my rectory," writes Mr. Robert Landor, "a Titian valued at twelve hundred guineas which my brother Henry purchased at the auction for ten pounds." It needs not to dwell further on these things.

As to his real estate he was happily more fortunate. By the annuity reserved under the act of Parliament to his mother, she became the first of his creditors; and being enabled to demand the management of Llanthony, she set apart from it for his use five hundred a year on condition that the money so advanced should be repaid to her younger children whenever by her death the estate at Ipsley should fall into his hands. Her life was prolonged for fourteen years, during which she had thus paid to him seven thousand pounds; and what was held to be a sufficient provision having accrued in the



same interval to the younger children, partly by her economy and partly by the bequests of other relatives, shortly before her death, with the entire concurrence of those other children, the above-named condition was abandoned and Llanthony released from that encumbrance. To this it will be only necessary to add that irrespective of all these arrangements there were simple contract debts unsettled which rendered for the present unadvisable not only any return to England, but even a continued residence at Tours; and Mr. Robert Landor, having at the time a project to visit Italy, at his brother's earnest request joined him at Tours that they might make the journey together.

Landor's stay in the hospitable old French town, not then so overrun with English as in later days, had been not without many enjoyments; for the ease with which at will he put off from his thoughts whatever troubled or harassed him, the old characteristic well known to his family, surprised even his brother when they met so soon after the tragedy of Llanthony. I have heard the latter, in relating their first visit together to the quaint old market-place with its splendid fountain where Walter had been in the habit of doing his own marketing daily during his exile, describe the joyous greeting that broke forth from all the market-women successively as he came in view, and his laughing word of jest or compliment for each that had given him universal popularity. The prefet of the town, next to the market-women, he seems to have regarded with most favor; it was the same who (I believe erroneously) was reported to have given brief refuge to Napoleon in his recent flight to the English coast; and it was always Landor's belief that he had seen the fugitive emperor dismount in the court-yard of the prefet's house in one of the suburbs, to which he had himself gone, finding the door unexpectedly closed to him, upon the very day when Napoleon was supposed to have passed through Tours.

In September the brothers started for Italy, and by means of a letter addressed in the following month to their mother by the younger of them I learn some of the incidents of their journey. Here are its opening sentences: "Walter wished very much to leave Tours on many accounts; amongst others, on account of its unhealthiness, the probability of fresh revolutions, and some personal apprehensions about his English creditors. I wished to see Italy; and as he pressed it most earnestly, and indeed could not travel without me, I agreed to accompany him. After contests with his landlady of a most tremendous description, we set off. Walter had kept his own carriage in all his distresses, and as posting was the cheapest thing in France, we posted: Walter and myself on the dicky, his wife and her maid within. Our road lay on the eastern side of the river Loire for more than two hundred miles. This side was occupied by the German troops, and the other by the French. Thus we passed, between Tours and Lyons, a distance of four hun-

dred miles, through 200,000 men, — Austrians, Prussians, Bavarians, Wirtembergers, Hessians. At Moulins the Prince of Hesse with all his staff was at the same hotel; and amused himself, whilst we were at supper, by standing with another officer at the door of our room and looking at Walter's wife. I ordered the door to be shut in his face. As this was done by an Englishman, he only laughed. If it had been done by a Frenchman or a German, there would have been no laughing on either side."

The acres of vineyards seen by them on the banks of the Loire, Landor himself would often refer to with enthusiasm as not numbering less than hundreds of thousands; and as they passed, he told me, he could not but remember Goldsmith and his flute; though the scene otherwise was unlike the poet's pastoral picture, for along the rocky parts of the shore they observed, miles together, the people making their homes in the rock. The towns on the route were dirty and ill-built as Lyons itself; but for the last half of the distance, the two hundred miles nearest that second city of France, they found the scenery liker their own than anywhere else, saw enclosures of quick with timber in the fences, rich and well-cultivated land, and young wheat much forwarder than in England. "It was from the bridge of Lyons we first saw the Alps, extending immediately in our front to a great distance. They were covered with snow half-way from the summits. It was about twenty miles from Lyons that one of our wheels broke for the third time, and we were detained more than a day. At last however we proceeded towards Chambéry, the capital of Savoy, and passed through a most enchanting and romantic country, — rocks, woods, vineyards, and the finest passes." What the letter proceeds to tell of their first impression of Italy, destined to be the home of one of them for more than twenty years and after another thirty years his final resting-place, is told with much reality and vividness. At first, it will be seen, Landor meant to have fixed his quarters at Chambéry; but he made wiser ultimate choice of the Lake of Como.

"Walter had hitherto intended to stop at Chambéry and live there; but he was too restless. Nothing can be more delightful or romantic than the country about Chambéry; and there are a great many pleasant houses situated at some distance from the town. The town itself is bad, and the eternal passage of Austrian troops made it disagreeable. Here we agreed with a voiturier; a man who undertakes to conduct you with his horses and carriages to any given distance for a certain sum, and to pay for your eating, drinking, and lodging. Walter gave him his carriage on condition that he would carry him free of expense first to Milan and afterwards to Como, twenty-five miles farther, where the Princess of Wales resides. I do not think that the bargain was a bad one for Walter, as his carriage was no longer serviceable in its present state. I gave eighteen louis d'or, or guineas, a little more than the common price, to be carried as far as Rome. From Chambéry we travelled along level roads between the most magnificent mountains. Many were covered with snow. These are the lowest



Alps. We rested four nights at miserable inns, and then passed Mount Cenis, one of the highest Alps, where a road was cut by Bonaparte which is considered the most wonderful in the world. It is not very steep in any part, but runs backwards and forwards up the side of the mountain. We had been rising very greatly for four days before we reached the foot of Mount Cenis, and it took as many hours to get up the side. But the other side, when we descended, was infinitely more grand and beautiful. It was indeed sublime. We looked down into Italy from above the clouds; and when we had travelled more than two hours we passed among vast woods of the grandest chestnuts for two more to the bottom. The wagons of the Austrian army were descending at the same time. It is the Italian side of these Alps that is far the finest. We reached Turin, the capital of Piedmont, two days after, — a fine town, with many large palaces. On one side there is a range of beautiful hills, which would be called mountains in England, covered with woods, palaces, country-houses, churches, and convents; on the other the Alps, which do not appear to be ten miles off, though they are thirty or forty, covered with ice and snow, and formed more beautifully than any painter in the world could imagine. The streets of Turin are all straight; and from some of them you see the hills which I have described when looking one way, and the Alps when looking the other. Three days more brought us to Milan, a great, ill-built, ugly town with a wonderful cathedral, the capital of Lombardy. Walter and his wife set off almost immediately for Como, and would arrive the same night. I wait till the carriage returns which took them, and in two days more shall set off again for Florence and Rome."

Of the small and great discomforts, and their trials of temper, incident to such a twenty days' journey over the seven hundred miles separating Milan from Tours, the son's letter told also something that the mother might be glad to hear, and, so far as there are touches of character, my readers too; but it must be read with allowances. If Mr. Robert Landor did not spare himself, of his brother he was quite as unsparing; and, with a very humane and proper chivalry which need not now be construed with excessive strictness, all his sympathy and all his pity were reserved for the pretty little wife. To an observer so generous as well as just, her advantages of sex as well as of youth and beauty were indeed very great; but though prepared for Walter's "ten thousand" fits of temper, it is a little startling, after the incident at Jersey, to find Walter's wife never giving way to even one. "He is seldom out of a passion or a sulky fit excepting at dinner, when he is more boisterous and good-humored than ever. Then his wife is a darling, a beauty, an angel, and a bird. But for just as little reason the next morning she is a fool. She is certainly gentle, patient, and submissive. She takes all the trouble, is indeed too officious, and would walk on foot most willingly if he wished it and she were able. If he loses his keys, his purse, or his pocket-handkerchief, which he does ten times in an hour, she is to be blamed; and she takes it all very quietly." Perhaps one might have said too quietly. There is such a thing as an ostentatious meekness, or, as the poor bad-tempered husband in the play puts it, a "malign excess of undemanded patience." Nor is it difficult to discover that the fits

of passion, on the other side, were rather of the lambent and phosphorescent than of a scorching or consuming kind. "If he is ever really unhappy, it is because the cook has put oil or garlic into the soup. Give him a good dinner well cooked, and he is happier than an emperor. He writes and reads all the day besides. As for his creditors, he cares no more about them or his own concerns than about Bonaparte's. He has plenty of money for this country; lives as well as ever he did in his life; and at Tours had even saved five-and-thirty pounds. He has one entire quarter in his banker's hands at present, after travelling so far."

Again, on the 10th of December in the same year, being then at Rome, Mr. Robert Landor wrote to his mother that he had heard from Walter at Como; that he found it expensive, was dissatisfied with it, and talked of going farther east; but that he had himself written to dissuade this, at least for the present. "He has seen nothing of Italy, and yet he swears that it contains nothing worth seeing. Every place is the worst." From Rome the writer had moved to Naples in April, 1816; and in a letter of the 26th of that month to their sister Elizabeth he tells her that Walter had written in the last week from Como, and seemed just then very tranquil and comfortable, but that for himself he would as soon trust to Vesuvius. Finally, having meanwhile paid a visit himself to Como, he writes thus again to that sister from Venice on the 24th of June: "At Como I found Walter and his wife in comfortable apartments, or rather in a comfortable house. But they had lost their English maid, whose misconduct in leaving, and depravity after having left, were not the least part of the grievance. Julia looks thin, but not pale; talks much of dying, and of returning to Bath, preferring the latter a little; and amuses herself in learning the very worst Italian from the old cook, who is quite unintelligible to Walter and everybody else. Walter is much as usual; that is, in very unequal spirits; fretful, gloomy, absent, and very gay by turns. Unfortunately the latter is not frequent, and I believe that I saw him to the greatest advantage. The lake is charming. The M——s joined me at Como, and liked Walter and his wife very well."

At Como Landor lived three years; and three more wandering years he passed, between Pisa and Pistoia, before he pitched his tent in Florence in 1821. Between the home he had lost in England and that which he thus found in Italy, this interval, measured even by the general driftless character of his life and ways, was so entirely unsettled, that it is not my intention to dwell upon it at any length. It will suffice if I indicate, by passages from his correspondence in these various places of abode, the subjects that from time to time occupied or interested him, and the manner in which his life was passed. My own comments will be very sparing.



## II. AT COMO.

The first letter written to Southey from Italy miscarried; and when again, in the June of 1816, Landor wrote to him, he had heard nothing from Keswick since leaving Tours.

## LETTER-SMUGGLERS.

"About three months ago a sort of pedler was going from Como to England, and I fancied I had an opportunity of sending you a letter by him. But I discovered that they are narrowly searched by the custom-house officers, and letters taken away from them and destroyed. I was disappointed, and he was more so; for I told him my letter was for the poet laureate of England, and to remove all incredulity wrote the address in that manner. I sent it, however, by the post."

## WHAT HIS BROTHER ROBERT THOUGHT OF ROME.

"My youngest brother, who has been at Rome and Naples, and indeed in all the other celebrated places of Italy, is now on his return, and will put this into some English post-office. He appeared to admire the character of the present Romans, though he carried with him many and strong prejudices against them. He represents them as sedate and silent, delicate and disinterested, brave and adorers of liberty. He was disappointed in all their ancient buildings, and thinks nearly all the modern extremely destitute of good taste. He prefers a picture of Theseus on one of the walls of Pompeii to even the best of Raffael, and indeed to any work of art he has ever seen except the Apollo Belvidere, and is convinced that the ancient painters were as much superior to the modern as the ancient statuaries."

## REGRETS AND WISHES OF AN EXILE.

"We often talk of you. I wish to God I could exchange the Lake of Como for the Lake of Keswick, just one evening. I know nothing of what passes either in the political or literary world. To be deprived of reading your works, and of seeing you for so many years, is infinitely the greatest loss I sustain in losing my country. I have engaged my house for a year and a half. I wish there was any hope of your coming into Italy. We have two spare rooms and one spare bed, the cleanest on this side of the Channel, and at Milan they make butter."

## AMUSEMENTS ON THE LAKE: JUNE, 1816.

"At Como we have been exempt from the —— of the Princess of Wales for a considerable time. I think I told you that her scudiere was postilion to Pino, a deserter from the Austrian service. He has now purchased an estate for 200,000 florins and his wife keeps her carriage and is allowed 15,000 florins a year. His brother is maggiordomo to the princess, and rides out covered with gold lace and accompanied by her servants. These rascals have kept her so poor that she has not yet been able to furnish her rooms. Is it not scandalous that the money of England should be squandered away on the most worthless wretches in Italy, when the most industrious men in England want bread? If we had one honest man in Parliament, would not *some* sort of notice be taken of it? Above all it

surprises me that the prince does not divorce her. . . . Lady Cumming, daughter of Lady Charlotte Campbell, went over to visit the princess. She saw her in the midst of the lake with her scudiere, whose arm was round her waist. Instead of returning, they proceeded to the house, where they found the prefet of Como, and soon afterwards the princess entered. In a few minutes the scudiere came swaggering in, made a slight bow to them, took no notice of the princess, but said to the prefet, 'Shall we see you at dinner?' The princess then invited him, and he stayed. As Lady C. had remembered him a footman under the princess, and now recognized him to be the person whose arm was round her waist, she took her leave. These rascals make a point of insulting all the English."

He had himself suffered from such insults, as he fancied, taking to himself what had probably no reference to him ; and his present information was to be accepted with much more caution than in the circumstances was likely to be given to it. It will appear hereafter that it was turned to immediate use. That any use would be made of it at all he does not seem to have imagined, and some sentences in this portion of the letter I am obliged to suppress.

It will be best so to deal also with its burst of anger against Mr. Munday of Oxford, for misprints in the *Idyllia* and for not sending the volume to his friends ; nor will the reader regret to lose its three-and-thirty scathing Latin lines against Ferdinand of Spain, just written for the cenotaph of Porlier, which he implored Southey to make public in the *Courier* with the name of the writer, as he wished to circulate them on the Continent as widely as he could.

Still Southey did not reply, and for many more months there was a silence incomprehensible to his friend. It had been a year of great trouble at Keswick. The heaviest affliction of Southey's life, the loss of his (then only) son, had fallen upon him in the spring of 1816 ; and in the following spring occurred the greatest vexation of his life, the publication from a stolen manuscript of his youthful drama of *Wat Tyler*, and the chancellor's (not very logical) refusal to restrain its sale, because of the injury it was calculated to do to society. To this troubled interval of silence on Southey's part belongs a letter characteristic of Landor in his best mood : sensitive and self-distrustful, but loyal to his friend ; in the manliest vein of sympathy ; and, though full of sorrow, nay, by reason of it, nobly consolatory.

"I have written many letters to you since I received one from you. Can anything occur that ought to interrupt our friendship? Believe me, Southey, — and of all men living I will be the very last to deceive or to flatter you, — I have never one moment ceased to love and revere you, as the most amiable and best of mortals, and your fame has always been as precious to me as it could ever be to yourself. If you believe me capable, as you must, of doing anything to displease you, tell it me frankly and fully. Should my reply be unsatisfactory, it will not be too late nor too soon to shake me off from all pretensions to your friendship. Tell it me rather while your resentment is warm than afterwards, for in the midst of resentment the heart is open to generous and tender sentiments ; it closes after-



wards. I heard with inexpressible grief of your most severe and irreparable loss, long indeed ago; but even if I had been with you at the time, I should have been silent. If your feelings are like mine, of all cruelties those are the most intolerable that come under the name of condolence and consolation. Surely to be told that we ought not to grieve is among the worst bitternesses of grief. The best of fathers and of husbands is not always to derive perfect happiness from being so; and genius and wisdom, instead of exempting a man from all human sufferings, leave him exposed to all of them, and add many of their own. Whatever creature told me that his reason had subdued his feelings, to him I should only reply that mine had subdued my regard for him. But occupations and duties fill up the tempestuous vacancy of the soul; affliction is converted to sorrow, and sorrow to tenderness; at last the revolution is completed, and love returns in its pristine but incorruptible form. More blessings are still remaining to you than to any man living. In that which is the most delightful of all literary occupations, at how immense a distance are you from every rival or competitor! In history, what information are you capable of giving to those even who are esteemed the most learned! And those who consult your criticisms do not consult them to find, as in others, with what feathers the most barbarous ignorance tricks out its nakedness, or with what gypsy shuffling and arrant slang detected impostures are defended. On this sad occasion I have no reluctance to remind you of your eminent gifts. In return I ask from you a more perfect knowledge of myself than I yet possess. Conscious that I have done nothing very wrong, I almost hope that I have done something not quite right, that I may never think you have been unjust towards me. W. L."

With more than the old affection Southey at once replied; explained now his recent silence by uncertainty as to a visit into Italy he had resolved himself to make; and hoped they would shortly meet. At Como they met accordingly at the end of June, 1817; and Southey stayed with his friend three days. In the poem already quoted\* for its mention of the visit to Llanthony, there is record of this visit also.

\* See *ante*, p. 199. I will add some lines from a later poem, *A Dream of the Elysian Fields*, in which his friend appears to him "the genial voice and radiant eye" unaltered, and they speak of their past days together:—

" 'I do not ask,'  
Said I, 'about your happiness; I see  
The same serenity as when we walkt  
Along the downs of Clifton. Fifty years  
Have rolled behind us since that summer-tide,  
Nor thirty fewer since along the lake  
Of Lario, to Bellaggio villa-crowned,  
Through the crisp waves I urged my sideling bark,  
Amid sweet salutation off the shore  
From lordly Milan's proudly courteous dames.'  
'Landor! I well remember it,' said he;  
'I had just lost my first-born only boy,  
And then the heart is tender; lightest things  
Sink into it, and dwell there evermore.'  
The words were not yet spoken when the air  
Blew balmier; and around the parent's neck  
An angel threw his arms: it was that son.  
Father, I felt you wisht me,' said the boy;  
Behold me here!'

Gentle the sire's embrace,

"War had paused: the Loire  
Invited me. Again burst forth fierce War.  
I minded not his fury: there I stayed,  
Sole of my countrymen, and foes abstained  
(Though sore and bleeding) from my house alone.  
But female fear impelled me past the Alps,  
Where, loveliest of all lakes, the Lario sleeps  
Under the walls of Como.

There he came  
Again to see me; there again our walks  
We recommenced . . . less pleasant than before.  
Grief had swept over him; days darkened round:  
Bellaggio, Valintevi, smiled in vain,  
And Monte Rosa from Helvetia far  
Advanced to meet us, wild in majesty  
Above the glittering crests of giant sons  
Stationed around . . . in vain too! all in vain!"

Nay, not wholly so; for it appears from what Southey wrote of his journey home, immediately on his return, that these and other shapes of beauty had made so far successful appeal to him as even to shake for a time his allegiance to his native lakes and mountains.

#### SOUTHEY TO LANDOR, SEPTEMBER, 1816.

"Our journey home was as prosperous as we could desire. The Lake of Lugano seemed to exceed the Lario in variety and in beauty; and the Maggiore, where we crost it, to exceed both: but probably in such scenery that which is present must always obtain the preference. The Isola Bella is at once the most costly and the most absurd effort of bad taste that ever has been produced by wealth and extravagance. What you had been told of the hissing of serpents in the vaults proved to be the noise of the bats, who have taken possession of the ground-tier in this ridiculous place. We saw them in great numbers flying in and out. Taking all things into consideration, I should prefer the neighborhood of Lausanne to any place on the Continent which I have seen for a residence. The loveliest places which we saw were the little tract between the Lakes of Thun and Brientz, and the Lake and Valley of Lingern, than which the heart of man could desire nothing lovelier. On my return Skiddaw did not appear to have lost anything in magnitude, — the mountains around the lake had; and I perceived a poverty and coldness in the valley: this however wore off in a few days, and Keswick is now as beautiful as ever."

When the friends met at Como their talk had been much of poetry; of what they were fain to think the very doubtful chances of duration to the then raging popularity of Byron; and of the advance made by Wordsworth in his last great poem. To these matters Southey refers in that letter of September, telling Landor that he had already despatched to him, along with his own *History of Brazil* and other books, not only Wordsworth's collected edition, but both his great poems published separately during the two last years, the *Excursion* and the *White Doe*. At the close of the same letter also, with much less than

Gentle his tone. 'See here your father's friend!'  
He gazed into my face, then meekly said:  
'He whom my father loves hath his reward  
On earth; a richer one awaits him here.'



his usual discrimination of passing events in those regions, he had spoken of the "ill-judged attempt at revolution" in Brazil, which he believed to have failed, and had expressed an opinion not only against the revolutionary governments in South America, but in favor of the probability of Russia joining Spain to put them down: "both powers equally regarding the Yankee Americans (we must not call them Anglo-Americans) as interlopers on that coast." In England he had found at his return little to relieve the generally black and dreary outlook, the Watson and Thistlewood trials having just ended in verdicts of acquittal: but there had been a good harvest, and "though the seditious press is as active as ever, the poison which it administers does not operate with the same effect upon a full stomach as upon an empty one." Upon all which subjects Landor will be found himself to have something to say.

One letter, bearing date the last day of August, he had already written since his friend's visit; and the verses which close it, and which have not been preserved elsewhere, show something of the effect upon the writer of what he had doubtless heard from Southey of his Wat Tyler and other feuds. The bitterest of the Byron quarrels had not yet broken out; but of all the *Quarterly* reviewers he who had been the most resolute and unsparing in striking at reform and reformers, remembering past days and his own fierce passion for reform, could hardly wonder at having now become a mark for many eager and envenomed assailants.\*

"I know not any better way of celebrating the anniversary of St. Abondio, the patron of Como, in whose church we enjoyed a cool hour in the hottest day of June, than by showing him as well as the police, who both have the privilege of reading my letters, that I have not forgotten the benefit I received from him. Whether you are yet at Keswick I can but conjecture. I hope shortly to hear that you are there, for you can feel and communicate all the pleasures of an Englishman's home. My plans are never fixed and never will be. I have taken my house at Como for another year, because my wife is unable to travel, and expects to be confined in the beginning of March. The climate does not agree with her, nor indeed can she bear any great degree of heat. You perceive that I creep onward in my pilgrimage to Rome like the good brother who had peas in his shoes, and not the boiled ones. There is one object which I have constantly wished to see above all others, and which I would rather see than all the cities in Italy, with Rome at their head: I mean the tomb of Cicero. And there is one duty which, if ever I am rich enough, I will perform. I will inscribe a simple tablet (for I hear there is none existing) to Ludlow. I am re-

\* It may not be out of place to show what Byron's real opinion of Southey was before bad temper embittered and distorted everything. They met at Holland House at the close of 1813, when Byron, greatly struck by Southey's appearance, protested that he would have written his Sapphics to have had his head and shoulders. Somewhat later, in a diary he was writing, he entered a more deliberate opinion: "Southey's appearance is *epic*; and he is the only existing entire man of letters. . . . His talents are of the first order. His prose is perfect. Of his poetry there are various opinions. There is perhaps too much of it for the present generation; posterity will probably select; but he has passages equal to anything."

minded by this resolution that I wrote some verses on your laureateship. They are these : —

Breath of what god hath blown the mists away,  
That thou whose influence filled the solitude,  
Whose music was for souls that shun the world,  
At length from thronging cities art beheld  
And hailed from pinnacles of palaces  
Far under thee, O Southey! late-beheld,  
As were the greater of the first-born stars  
The nearest to their mighty Maker's throne.  
Sit light of heart in the clear cool serene,  
Where other voice than that which called thee none  
Is heard around, nor other harp than thine.

What serpents slid athwart thy noontide path!  
What birds of evil omen flapped their wings  
Heavily, lower and lower! their darksome eye  
Saw not that radiant visage burst the clouds,  
That right hand beckon upward, and that left  
Point toward Python with the golden bow.

If this be earth, so lofty and so pure,  
Thou hast not left it utterly, divine  
Astrea! She who led the son of Jove,  
And fixed his choice, performed her office here;  
But Thou upon the summit hast received  
Him whom she brought, and from thy righteous hand  
(Nine white-robed virgins hymning slow before)  
Upon his brow I saw the crown descend."

Hardly had that letter been despatched however, when Southey's of the 17th September reached its destination; and on the various subjects named in it comment was made in a reply by Landor on the 20th November, 1817.

#### NON-ARRIVAL OF BOOKS, AND BOOKSELLERS' ROGUERIES.

I have been expecting not a little impatiently the library you have sent me from England. Two months have expired since the date of your letter; the ship ought to have reached Genoa in twenty days. It is unfortunate that Longman did not inform you of its name and captain. I am not much surprised at the roguery of Munday. He was paid in advance for printing my Latin poems, and has not sent a single copy to any of my friends or to myself; in contempt of my repeated orders. I begin to think that the English are become more rascally than any other nation. Few men have had concerns with fewer men than I have; yet I have been defrauded to the amount at least of seventeen thousand pounds by about half a dozen rogues."

#### SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS AND DANGERS FROM RUSSIA.

"I never trouble my head with European politics; but I must confess that, for many reasons, I am deeply interested in the success of the South-Americans. First, because I wish every nation under heaven to be independent; and secondly, because it is highly advantageous to England that some near and close counterpoise should exist against North America, now becoming a formidable and most mischievous power. Is it possible that the English can be insensible to the efforts of Russia, in favor of Spain? Are our ministers ignorant that the empire of Russia in five-and-twenty years will extend from the Adriatic to the plains of Mexico, from Lapland to the fountains of the Ganges and the wall of China? I will stake my head



against a brass sixpence — or, what is of less value, against any one of theirs — on the fact. We ought to have insisted on the *independence* of Poland, governed by a Russian prince, but never united to Russia; we should have insisted on its integrity, and have given Denmark and Saxony (both fairly forfeited) in lieu of Polish Prussia. I am certain that we never shall be what we have been, and I am equally certain that we might have been more great than ever."

#### EVIL OF TOO MANY MINISTERS: A WORD FOR CHATHAM.

"We are the only people in the universe, except the Spaniards, whose national debt is a grievous burden; and that of Spain is intrinsically so considerable, that a firm hand could reduce it to nothing in ten years. The proper means are apparent, and, what is better, are adopted; but can they be carried into execution by a government that has many ministers? Cabinets, as they are called, are the ruin of politics. Never was this fact so clearly proved as in the time of Chatham. A minister ought to be sole and absolute, but responsible. Had I been in the place of Chatham, I would have committed all the opposition of the cabinet to the Tower on a charge of high treason, and have brought them to trial when I had carried my plans into execution. The success of them, which was certain, would have satisfied the public mind, and have left me without impediment in future."

The letter closed with a long Latin poem. He had at last had courage, he told his friend, to recommence his *Sponsalia Polyxene*, and he would transcribe just what his paper will hold: whereupon he makes the paper hold all of it, no less than one hundred and twenty-seven hexameters! He did not imagine, he adds, that he could have written in such small characters as to include the whole poem. "You will rank me as a sort of undertaker among the fraternity. I could not refuse a bunch of white plumes and a sprig of rosemary to poor Polyxena; but I have much curtailed my original plan, of which I retain only the two first verses."\*

Of course his alarm about the books was premature. I say of course, because the characteristic that attended him through his life, and which I never knew once to fail him in all his later years, was his inability to wait with proper patience for anything. He wrote again, in the middle of December, 1817, to say that the packet had come.

#### THE CENSORSHIP IN ITALY.

"If I had waited five days longer, I should not have sounded an alarm about the books. They have arrived safe, and, what is extraordinary, sound. Before I was permitted the use of them they were examined by a person who understands not a word of English, lest they should contain anything against the church or the government. When he had satisfied his mind on the subject, he sent them to my house. Surely against a government so liberal and enlightened as it ought to be from its vicinity to Turkey, the most ingenious and the most malevolent could utter not a syllable; but the church is at least equal in liberality, and has its own authority (an inflexible one according to its own decrees) that it never can be shaken. Its

\* See *Poemata et Inscriptiones*, pp. 11-16. Translated by him in *Hellenics*, pp. 193-200. In its final form the *Sponsalia* had become enlarged to one hundred and eighty-four lines.

liberality is carried to such a point that any man may be an atheist and must only not be a heretic, and may follow Christ where he chooses if he is not ordered to the contrary by St. Augustin. I perceive by the Lugano Gazette that an accession has lately been made to literature by the discovery of two hundred sermons written by this saint. They were found in the library of Monte Cassino. I very much fear that, even in our own times, some classical works have been destroyed or consigned to darkness by the persons whom the Pope appoints to superintend this ancient repository."

#### A VISIT FROM AN EDITOR OF PLATO.

"Two months ago I received a visit from M. Becker, who has made discoveries in Greek works and has added a little to those of Plato, of whom he has given, as I understand, a very correct and admirable edition. I never saw a more modest man. He informed me, on my inquiry, that after repeated applications to several persons in power, he could not obtain permission to see anything more of the Ambrosian Library than any other traveller. Before he had time to begin writing any remarks, the doors were closed, and they are opened only on stated days. He could not help comparing this conduct with the frankness and anxiety shown in every German library that books should be read and examined. Dr. Angelo Mai, who published a few pages of Cicero, and Fronto, and Symmachus, promised much and performed nothing. He seemed to consider the library as a property, in which his friends support him. The Ambrosian Library has not even a catalogue."

#### WORDSWORTH.

"The first of your magnificent books that I took out of the box was Wordsworth. I would have given eighty pounds out of a hundred that he had not written that verse,

‘Of *high respect* and gratitude sincere.’

It is like the verses of the Italians, Spaniards, &c., quite colloquial; and ‘*high respect*,’ an expression borrowed from the French, is without intrinsic sense. Wordsworth has the merit, the rarest of all merits and the most difficult to be certain of, to avoid street-and-house language and to be richly endowed with whatever is most simple, pure, and natural. In his Lyrical Ballads he has sometimes disappointed me, just as an Æolian harp has done when I expected a note more. These books have wakened me up. I shall feed upon them till I fall asleep again, but that will not be until I have devoured all."

The line objected to is in the dedication to the *Excursion*, and is one of those unaccountable descents into dead flat prose which dismay, not seldom, the readers of this noble poet.

Before the year closed Southey wrote to him again; thanking him for a box of books he had sent from Milan; describing to him a correspondence with his brother Robert about the Latin poems, of which the result had been that the impression printed at Oxford would be transferred from Slatter and Munday to the Longmans, so that he might strike the Oxford printers out of his black list; and, upon a subject of which they had talked much when together, the serpents in the neighborhood of Milan, sending him not merely a learned disquisition but some prescriptions against their venom,



which he prays that St. Abondio may bless, since he owes that saint indeed a good turn for the delicious shelter he had afforded them on that hottest of days of which his friend had reminded him. Then there is a curious passage. Landor is told that what he had communicated about the lady of the lake might not improbably be important (it wanted yet three years to the too famous "trial"); that the amusements of Como were not unlikely before long to become the amusements of England; and that if it should be so, from the lady's sympathizers throughout the kingdom the "knight" would doubtless have plenary absolution for all those offences which in old time were punished with brimstone, the "assassin" would be as popular among the London liberals "as Bonaparte (why not?)," and the other worthy would be a red-letter saint in the *Morning Chronicle*. Similar and not less significant passages were in the letters that he and Landor's brother had exchanged upon the transfer of the Latin poems.

SOUTHEY TO ROBERT LANDOR: KESWICK, 27TH DECEMBER, 1817.

"I had a letter from your brother three days ago. He is more out of humor with the Ambrosian Library, or rather with the librarian, than I was. Perhaps this may be because Becker, who complained to him of his treatment there, was a German, and therefore less likely to be treated with attention at Milan than an Englishman would be.

"It would not surprise me if the amusements of Como were to be brought forward ere long for public discussion, and the Scudiere, the Knight, and the Assassin were to enjoy their deserved celebrity in this enlightened country, and become as popular as Bonaparte and Mr. Hone."

ROBERT LANDOR TO SOUTHEY: HITCHENDEN, 7TH JANUARY, 1818.

"I am induced by some inquiries which have been made relative to Como since the receipt of your letter to believe that your suppositions are well founded. For my part I had nothing to communicate, and I am sorry that the subject should be discussed. Since it is now so clear, in the opinion of all enlightened men, that blasphemy is not injurious to religion, we may shortly learn that adultery is not offensive to morals. As for treason, there is no such thing: it is as ridiculous as witchcraft. There is no way by which a man can gain either fame or riches half so easy and expeditious as by doing something for which he would have been hanged fifty years ago. We shall have large subscriptions for the scudiere and assassin, and this 'persecution' will end in making the most infamous woman in Europe the most popular."

A family event of some importance was announced in the next letter to Southey from Como.

BIRTH OF LANDOR'S FIRST CHILD IN MARCH, 1818.

"When we met at Como last year, I do not think you had any suspicion that I was in process of time about to become a father. Such however is the case. I have at last a little boy, to whom I have given the names of Arnold Savage. I would rather that he had been born in England, and wish I could look forward to his education there. However, if I can do nothing

more for him, I will take care that his first words and his first thoughts shall arise within sight of Florence. We certainly leave Como in September, and shall probably spend the winter at Genoa; if not, it will either be at Florence or Pistoia."

That was in May, 1818. Already, on the 5th of the preceding month, he had informed his mother of the event as having occurred "exactly a month ago."

#### ARNOLD SAVAGE LANDOR.

"I intend to call the boy Arnold Savage, from a Sir Arnold Savage, who was second speaker of the House of Commons, and who, as Mr. Bevan assured me, was of our family, and proprietor of Baginton. I looked for him in a book which I bought on purpose, and procured with extreme difficulty, written by a person named Hakewell, on the manner of holding parliaments, and found that Sir Arnold Savage was the first who declared that grievances should be redressed before money should be granted. I have so much respect for a person of this stamp that I should be likely to name a son after him, even if I had no connection with his family or name. The ceremony of baptism is the same here as in England, and the godfather does not promise that the child shall be educated in any kind of Romish idolatry or superstition. For which reason I shall comply with the custom of the country in about five or six days. He will be christened again in England, if he should return within the next twelve or fourteen years; but on this subject I am doubtful, or rather I am indifferent. I have learned that it is possible to live out of England, and that a person who hates all society can do without it here full as well as there."

The other contents of the May letter to Southey may be left to explain themselves.

#### A STRANGE REPORT.

"A most extraordinary piece of intelligence reached us yesterday, that the Princess of Wales and five of her rascals had been poisoned. Such is the profound ignorance of the English character among this most degraded and infamous people, that it is considered as a thing beyond all doubt that the English have committed this atrocity. I could not refrain from making the following remark: 'There is only one nation in Europe accused of such villany, and that nation is far removed in all its institutions and feelings from the English.' Although the report is circulated among the best-informed, I am inclined to disbelieve it. Surely it is more probable that the sudden and violent heats have inflamed the blood of creatures who are always half drunk, or that disease or the remedies of disease are preying on their constitutions. It is not indeed quite impossible that those who are implicated in the forgery of the two letters of exchange have despatched a wretch capable both of employing and betraying them; nor that jealousy, not arising from the enjoyment of personal charms, but from the disposal of pecuniary favors, has precipitated some of the scoundrels in her service to commit this atrocious deed. She has a known and convicted assassin in her household, and who knows but some such untoward accident may have befallen her as befell Cesar Borgia, and played a sorry trick upon the infallibility of his father? We shall certainly know more of the matter soon. The Pope's government is excellent in all respects, and Consalvi is at once the most honest and prudent statesman in Europe. He will unravel the mystery; for whoever may be the contriver of this mischief, the perpetrator must be in the house."



## THE ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE WELLINGTON.

"The attempt that was made a little while ago on the Duke of Wellington is blamed by a French poet — for failing! His verses are: —

'La maladresse est un défaut;  
Mais tout s'explique, et voici comme:  
L'imbécile a visé trop haut,  
Il l'aura pris pour un grand-homme.'

Surely the maladresse of the assassin was not greater than that of the poet, that *all* the French generals, with the emperor at their head, should be conquered by a person who was not a great man at all. I wrote an answer: —

A nos trois premiers chefs qui vainquirent la France  
Il coûtait maint effort et de glaive et de lance.  
Qui nous expliquera, poète ou guerrier, '*comme*'  
On le fait aujourd'hui sans s'appeler '*grand homme*'?"

## AS TO SERPENTS.

"The only well-informed and rational man I ever converse with here informs me as a certain fact that other serpents than are commonly met with are seen occasionally on the mountains near Val Intelvi, where he formerly lived. In the family of the Borromei is the skeleton of one, — of that species which gave rise to the fable of dragons with something like wings. There is no appearance, he says, of fallacy in this phenomenon. He himself has seen the aspide, which he represents as having a head broader and larger than any other snake. That some islands should be exempt from these reptiles and others abound in them proves clearer than anything that some are split off from continents and others emerged from the sea. Britain was certainly part of a continent; and one would fancy that Ireland was, from its proximity. But this simple fact, in my mind, destroys the hypothesis. Cyprus always abounded in poisonous reptiles. Crete was always exempt from them; so was Delos and the Cyclades. The situation of all the latter leads one to believe in their marine origin, different from Cyprus. I must go to see the Borromean serpent. I cannot but suspect that a bat's wings have been appended by some learned Tagliacotius. If a serpent had wings, he would have no occasion to be a serpent."

This was Landor's last letter from Como, which he quitted for Genoa in the following September. He had already so resolved, as we see; but when the time came it was no longer a matter of choice, for he had meanwhile, as he said himself in a note to one of his sisters, made the place too hot to hold him.

## III. AT PISA.

## LAST INCIDENTS AT COMO.

"A scoundrel, one Monti, wrote a most violent invective in the form of a sonnet against England, in which he prays that heaven may refuse her light for her wars and *treachery* against St. Napoleon. I answered it in Latin, and attempted to print my poem, with an epigram on Voltaire and four others, in which no name whatever was employed. The censor declared that they were six libels. I expostulated with him. I informed him,

for I had consulted a sensible jurist, that censors never refused their license to Latin compositions unless sovereigns or their alliances, or religion or morals, were attacked. I attributed his proceeding to ignorance of these customs, and not to injustice; and I directed a copy of my letter to Count Strasoldo, principal of the council. Instead of correcting a gross abuse of power, this gentleman wrote a long letter to the regio delegato of the province. The regio delegato sent me information that my Latin poems were detained *only* because it was customary to send two copies, one of which continued in the archives of the censor, but that if I was desirous of it I might apply to his office. Not caring about the copy, I never went. About a week afterwards he sent a second letter, to inform me that he requested my attendance on affairs very interesting to me. I went immediately. He then discovered his first fallacy, and began to read a letter from Count Strasoldo, in which this fellow expressed his surprise that I should use *injurious* expressions towards the royal censor, a person immediately acting under government. He then closed the letter and thought it requisite to make a comment upon it. He was astonished that I should write an *insolent* letter. I stopped him quietly, and said, 'Sir, the word *insolent* is never applied to a gentleman. If you had known the laws of honor or propriety you would not have used it; and if you had dared to utter it in any other place you would have received a *bella bastonata*.' At this he sprang from his chair and rang the bell. He called the guards and all the officers of the police, who live under the same roof during the daytime. With these reinforcements he pursued: 'Prepare instantly to conduct this gentleman to Milan. Sir, unless you immediately retract your words you answer to government.' I replied: 'I never retract any word of mine; but I tell you in presence of all these persons that before I leave this room you shall retract yours.' He then pretended that he said *rather* insolent, that insolent meant disrespectful or violent, that if I had understood the language I should not have animadverted on the expression, that he expressed the sentiments of Count Strasoldo. I replied: 'I care not a quattrino what are the sentiments of Count Strasoldo; but he would not dare, and you may tell him that he would not dare, from me, to use any such expression towards his equal. There is not one among the guards you have called in who would endure it. As for your sending me to Milan under arrest, do it, if you are not afraid of exposing yourself still more than you have done.' He then began talking of his honor, that he had been in the service, that the threat of a caning was not to be borne, and that if it was not for his high office he would settle the business with his sword in the square. I laughed in his face; and the rascal had the baseness to offer his hand in token of reconciliation, and to tell me what a friend he had always been of the English. The story was carried all over the town the same evening, although it rained heavily; and what surprises me is that it was told correctly. I remained in Como a week longer, rather wishing to be sent for to Milan. My time expired on the 19th of September. I protracted my stay till the 28th, and no attempt was made to assassinate me."

After brief stay at Genoa, Landor now determined to settle at Pisa for a time. He would fain have pushed on to Florence, but the reported cheapness of living at Pisa induced him to make trial of it.

#### FROM COMO TO PISA.

"I reached Genoa in three days, the most magnificent city in the world,



and the most reasonably discontented. I found the people civil, and, contrary to their usual character, honest. They flattered themselves that 20,000 English were coming to take them under our dominion. I came to Pisa because I had heard formerly that it was a cheap place. On the contrary, it is the very dearest I ever lived in, and the tradesmen sell nothing but refuse. Tea is double the price it is at Genoa, and, considering the quality, ten times dearer. The wine I cannot swallow. Several English gave fifty and forty-five zechins a month for indifferent lodgings. What blockheads must those be who imagine the hanging tower to have been built designedly so! Almost every tower and every great building either leans or is cracked in the neighborhood. In fact the foundations are of sand, formerly covered by the sea. Here is a cloister round an old cemetery called the Campo Santo, by much the best building I have seen in Italy. It is a light but not too florid Gothic, and by miracle no architect has been permitted to corrupt it. The Italian architects, with the single exception of Palladio, are the most fantastic merry-andrews. Even Bramante and M. Angelo would not permit antiquity to be antiquity; they wanted girlish airs and graces where they found matronly decorum. I remain here rather more than two months longer. Pray let me hear how you and Mrs. S. do, and whether you have bought your house as you intended. If it were in a milder climate it would be better. When we stand between forty and fifty we want the sun and zephyrs for other purposes than poetry."

#### READING WORDSWORTH.

"It is very, very long indeed since I have heard from you. I forget whether in my last letter or the preceding I mentioned that I had received the books. I am reading over and over again the stupendous poetry of Wordsworth. In thoughts, feelings, and images not one amongst the ancients equals him, and his language (a rare thing) is English. Nations are never proud of living genius. Surely no country under heaven has produced in twenty years so much excellent poetry and such a rich lattermath of what approaches to good as our own in the last twenty. Our breakfastable poets alone are fairly worth all the long-winded beaux of Louis XIV. I have, however, a great fondness for La Fontaine; for I never see an animal, unless it be a parrot or a monkey or a pug-dog or a serpent, that I do not converse with either openly or secretly. Besides, La Fontaine is the only French writer in verse who knows when he has said enough."

Southey lost no time in replying; but another letter crossed his on its way, conveying to him, early in February, 1819, a Latin ode to Bernadotte, *Carmen ad Regem Suedorum*.

"Hearing that all the poets in France and Germany are contending for the prize decreed by the Academy of Stockholm to be given for the best ode on the accession of Bernadotte, I resolved to set myself against the continent. If you have any means of forwarding my ode to the Royal Academy of Stockholm, pray do. Bernadotte has this merit: he has kept his word, and given an excellent and most liberal constitution to Sweden, or rather restored one. For which reason I place him next to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar among the sovereigns of Europe, and sincerely wish him a long and happy reign. The few lines at bottom, announcing my intentions, should be inclosed, and sealed or wafered separately. I never felt greater anxiety than now to hear from you. For God's sake write soon. Direct Mr. W. S. Landor, gentiluomo Inglese, Firenze, Italy, because the English

letters are always put apart in the office. I remember your mentioning that Mr. Frere had made out some old Greek ballads from the *Odyssea*. It is curious that Cicero should have entertained the same idea; surely not from his knowledge of poetry. He, however, must have given Mr. Frere his idea of the fact. Adieu. Many, many happy years!"

The "few lines at the bottom" were in characteristic vein. If the lines got the prize, it was to be given away in charity. "Si forte hoc, Academici, carmen præmio dignetur, id velim pauperibus detis, aut, quemadmodum visum erit, adversâ valetudine laborantibus. SAVAGIUS LANDOR."

Meanwhile from Keswick, on the 3d of January, Southey has acknowledged ("it came in eighteen days") the December letter from Pisa; has excused his recent silence by prolonged anxiety for the health of his wife; has recommended Landor, when he had seen enough of Italy, to try a short stay in Switzerland; and has told him that before that time they may perhaps meet again. "I dream of seeing Rome before I die."

#### LANDOR'S REPLY : (APRIL, 1819.)

"The idea that I shall see you before I leave Italy makes my residence here much delightfuller. When my spirits wax faint I say to myself, 'I have yet to see Rome and Southey.'"

#### AGAIN THE LATIN ODE TO BERNADOTTE.

"If I remember right, your last letter of the 3d of January came a few days after I wrote from Pisa. Mine contained an ode to the King of Sweden. I wrote it, both because I consider him as the most patriotic king that ever lived, and because I hear the Germans and French are contending for a prize to be given for the best poem on the subject by the Royal Academy of Sweden. In a separate piece of paper I said something of this kind: 'Si carmen hoc nostrum præmio dignum judicabitur, habeant pauperes,' with my name. If my letter reached you, perhaps you have had some opportunity of sending it to the president. Lest it should not, I will transcribe the verses again, not caring greatly whether they ever reach their further destination or not. Remember what a library you sent me last year, and pray do not think of adding anything to the two volumes I am anxiously expecting, the last of the *History of Brazil* and *Life of Wesley*. I shall read both with great interest, but less the first time than *Roderick* the fourth. *Roderick*, I think, contains a greater variety of powers put into action than *Kehama*. It did not delight me nor agitate me so much, yet there is no poem in existence that I shall read so often."

Very sore was Southey's need of his friend's praise just now, for upon him and upon Wordsworth dark days had set in. The still continuing and increasing rage for Byron and his imitators had all but extinguished what scant popularity the others once enjoyed, and for selling power their books were at zero. Southey had hoped to see the bubble burst in a year or two; but double the time had come and gone, and never did it soar so high as now, or flare out with what doubtless seemed to him such frothy but highly colored pre-



tences. Replying to that letter of his friend in May, 1819, he cannot control his temper. He describes the fashionable compound as made up of morbid feelings, atrocious principles, exaggerated characters, and incidents of monstrous and disgusting horror; adding that the more un-English, un-Christian, and immoral it was, the surer it was of being better liked, provided only it were slavered over with a froth of philosophy. Was it wonderful that, such being the fashion, Wordsworth was despised and abused? The getting abused in such company was his own solitary bit of comfort, for nobody paid him the compliment of imitating what *he* did. His friend's ode had gone to Sweden through the ambassador; and he was going shortly to send him, by Wordsworth's express desire, a little poem with a prologue he would be much pleased with.\* At the close of the letter, which announces also the birth of a son, he tells Landor that somebody had mentioned him that week in the *Westmoreland Gazette* as the English poet who most resembles Goethe. "I do not know enough of Goethe to judge how far this assertion may be right; but a writer who estimated you so justly must have been capable of estimating him. O that you had been as incapable of writing Latin verse as I am! God bless you."

To this letter Landor replied from Pistoia; whither he had gone, moving still nearer to Florence, at the approach of the summer of 1819.

#### IV. AT PISTOIA.

##### BIRTH OF A SON TO SOUTHEY: JUNE, 1819.

"Thank God! Tears of joy came into my eyes on seeing that you are blessed with a son. The same kind Providence that has given the child will watch over the mother. Present my most cordial congratulations to her, and tell her that of all the women that exist on earth, she has occupied my thoughts the most for many, many months. A long series of happy days lies before you, — of happy days well earned. I am glad on every account that your brother is come to reside near you.† Exercise in itself is good; but the cessation of study, at more frequent intervals than you are disposed to allow, is far more important. I never studied so much as you have always done, yet, after four years of a rather close attention to books, my eyes were weakened. Sea-bathing restored them, but they are sometimes dim. I used to play the river-god in a very humble manner, placing the palms of my hands upon the hard gravel of the Arrow, and making my legs plash about like weeds. Idleness is as dear to me as to any gypsy, but above all, idleness in the water or upon it."

##### BRAZIL AND THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

"In respect to Brazil, you have many means of forming a correct judgment which I have not, but I differ from you totally. *Mali pecoris contagia*

\* "Peter Bell."

† Southey's letter had told of his brother the sea-captain's farm within four miles of Keswick, and of his own pleasure in visiting him there, and bathing in the "beck" at the bottom of his fields, "where there are natural baths of all depths, and seats where you may act the river-god."

*laudent.* The Portuguese will not be seduced by the republic of Venezuela; the inhabitants of Monte Video, whether subject to Brazil or not, will harmonize little with the Brazilians, but the sailors and merchants of North America will instil the slower poison of disaffection. The military system of Brazil is both oppressive and inefficient. Chili seems to me the most likely to be happy and powerful: happy because virtuous, powerful because unassailable. The climate, the people, the remote situation, are equally favorable to the growth of freedom. I wish they were governed by a Bernadotte or a Consalvi. But how seldom in a thousand years is a nation blessed with such prudent statesmen! Would to God that either one or the other had governed England at the commencement of the French Revolution! France had been divided by her factions at this hour, and England the arbitress of Europe without the pressure of debt.

"Yankee-land \* will crack and split asunder, either in the combustion of party or under the driving sirocco of avarice, but will corrupt many thousands of our seamen first, and injure the character of our merchants by her connection with them."

#### BYRON, HIMSELF, AND GOETHE.

"It is just as easy to write a breakfast-table poem as to make the drawing of a giant on a wall: who cares about the features, or looks for anything but the giant? I have read the *Bride of Abydos*. Lord B. may well ask,

'Know ye the land  
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,  
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute?'

Who the devil does? But why should the young rascal, the hero of the piece, take such infinite pains to show his mistress his insincerity at the moment he would seduce her from home?

'Bound where thou wilt, my barb, or glide my prow,  
But be the star that guides the wanderer, thou.'

The star then is either a barb or a boat, explain it as he may afterwards. There are several other such incoherences, not worth looking for. I would never publish a poem that contained any character of a human being until I had lived with that character two or three years. I left off *Count Julian* and his daughter twice, because each had said things which other persons might say: the other characters are no characters at all, — mere shadows, passing before me often, but never entering into my heart, or questioned by me why they did this or thought that. As to *Gebir*, I am certain that I rejected what *almost* every man would call the best part. I am afraid that I have boiled away too much, and that something of a native flavor has been lost in procuring a stronger and more austere one. My sole felicity as a poet is this, that when I wrote *Gebir* I had read no modern Continental poetry whatever, except the *Henriade* of Voltaire, one tragedy (I forget which) of Corneille, and La Fontaine's fables. Fresh from reading the Greek tragedians and Pindar, Voltaire and Corneille were intolerable to me. La Fontaine gave me, and gives me still, great pleasure, because I love to enter into the thoughts of animals and contract a friendship with them

\* Southey had talked freely in his last letter of Yankee-land in connection with a visit to him of some young Bostonians, George Ticknor and others, whom he had found accomplished in fine literature far beyond the run of their countrymen, but who had failed to cure him of his grudge against America. "Our French neighbors are fond of comparing us to the Carthaginians, but the parallel would suit the Americans better, for their commercial, military, and naval skill, their boundless ambition, their dishonesty, and their lack of literature."



whenever they come in my way. I could wish I understood a little German, to see the resemblance between me and so celebrated a poet as Goethe. I do not admire his *Sorrows of Werter*."

#### POETS AND THEIR IMITATORS.

"I am glad you have finished the *History of Brazil*, not because our literature wanted history, as it did most grievously, but because the New England poem will give you in writing and me in reading ten thousand times greater delight. You have no imitators, not because you are not fashionable only, but because you have no trick. Have you never observed how fond low people are (and poetry has its low people) of imitating any legerdemain? God in his mercy preserve you and Wordsworth first from translators, and next from imitators. The present of a book from W. will be one of the three or four eras in my life; and those who come after me, if they remember and love me, will show it to their friends. Give your little boy a kiss for me. In one of my letters that miscarried from Como I mentioned that I also had a son. He begins to walk. I am anxious for the time when he will talk as much nonsense to me as I have to him. Among my few blessings I have always reckoned this, that every child in the world loves me. Amongst grown men, I question whether there are five upon earth that do."

The same subjects are resumed and pursued in another letter, written also from Pistoia in the following month, which continues the reply to his friend.

#### SOUTHEY'S SON: JULY, 1819.

"On the receipt of your letter, which gave me more joy than anything that has occurred for many years, I immediately wrote an answer, and requested Dr. Randolph to leave it, with a little poem, at Longman's. A few hours afterwards I recollected that he did not think of reaching England before October. What a large and varied scene of delights and enjoyments is opening before you! Nor are they lost upon me. I enjoy them in all my walks, and in all the better moments of my solitude."

#### DRAWBACKS OF BATHING IN THE OMBRONE.

"I too used formerly to act the river-god and sea-god on every fair occasion; but our Ombrone is a river only a few months in the year, and if I assumed the dignity of representing him in any little hollow of his channel, there would be a danger of being obliged to sustain the same character in the streets of Pistoia. The first passenger would steal my clothes. Have you never observed in the Roman writers how perpetually they talk of thieves? All the authors on husbandry, and all the poets, are full of them. The windows of every house, both in town and country, are barred below. The Italians have always been the most thievish of nations, and I think the French (to their honor be it spoken) the least."

#### WORDSWORTH AND HIS ASSAILANTS.

"I am impatient to see Wordsworth's new poem: partly, I am afraid, from an avidity of honor. This passion preys upon me as little as upon most men, but I am rather feverish at the thought that Wordsworth is

about to give me one of his writings. Exhort him, if he wants exhorting, to continue his great work; and, if it can be done without offending him, press him never to notice in future those contemptible writers and bad men to whom his notice even in resentment is an important acquisition. Hostility, not only between states, but between individuals, is apt to present some idea of parity. God forbid that these rascals, drunk or dreaming, should ever experience or excite it."

#### AGAIN THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

"Your *History of Brazil* contains facts which would have been eternally lost to the world if you had not collected them. In my opinion another half-volume would close it entirely. I cannot see how so vile a government can endure seven years. What an amazing general is Artigas! Europe has seen nothing like him since Sertorius. Happy would it have been for Buenos Ayres if its armies had been intrusted to this marvellous creature instead of opposed to him. I hope our government will discern that South America may become our best ally against North America, and that we may, next year or the following, assist it in recovering Florida or Louisiana.

"Our first business is to intercept the rotten expedition at the moment when the crew is dying of thirst. I dread the future naval power of North America, because she will fight us with the best of our own sailors, and will employ none but experienced ones. Why could not we have given every sailor a badge, and have paid his arrears weekly, with rather more than a proportional increase? In that case they must have remained with England; they would have received somewhat above their due, and, before it could be exhausted, would have found new employment from our merchants, who should have been obliged to take those who bore the badge in preference to others.

"It appears to me perfectly just to strip Spain of Mexico and the Island of Chiloe. A declaration of war against us could never have done us a tenth of the injury we suffer from the cession of Florida. The South Sea presents a new world to our commerce, which territory alone can establish and secure."

#### CLOSE OF THE LETTER.

"I hope Mrs. Southey has quite recovered from her confinement, and that your little boy will be your comfort and blessing.

"I just now remember some verses I wrote last year at Nervi, near Genoa:—

Æstate dulces est, sub latebris rupium,  
Auræ marinæ mitibusque fluctibus  
Mentem atque corpus otiosum tradere;  
Sed gaudium isto majus unum est gaudium  
Quascunque terras alluat mare, innatans  
Te, patria, tango, et potior amplexu tuo."

At the approach of winter Landor turned back to Pisa; disappointed of a house he hoped to have engaged in Florence, but still bent upon finally settling there. His principal occupation since he left Como had been the preparation of a Latin dissertation, to accompany another more complete collection of his Latin Poems, On the use and cultivation of the language by modern Latinists, the reasons why they were not read more widely, and the advantages that



would result from employing Latin universally in works of taste and imagination. Upon this latter amazing paradox he wasted wonderful pains and ingenuity; and for its extraordinary mastery over the language, its free and daring criticism of classics both ancient and modern, and its varied reading not alone in Greek and Latin but in Italian and English literature, it would justify a mention in greater detail than can be given to it here.\* I use it here only as an illustration of character. It was written under a persuasion, absolute while it lasted, that he might thus obtain an audience for what he had to say not only greatly wider but far more enduring than if he continued to write in his native tongue; and though he soon repented of this purpose to put forth nothing more in English that was either critical or imaginative, he had a lurking belief to the very last, that he should live to be recognized as a poet by reason of his Latin writings, when not only his, but all the English poems contemporary with his, should with the language itself have drifted hopelessly away. Nor were the eccentric turns of his temper on this point without some advantage in the end. Never till he was making that preposterous engagement to use the brave old speech no longer, had he made himself so thoroughly acquainted with its masterpieces even in tracks quite apart from his ordinary reading. What the character of his studies had been in past days of leisure he has already related in his letter to the Chancellor Eldon,† and his silent companions at Llanthony were his later heroes in many an imaginary conversation; but besides this large acquaintance with other than English writers, the latter also had recently become more variously familiar to him. Until he lived abroad, he used to say he did not know what a library was; and very generally he had now enlarged the circle of the authors with whom he was in the habit of passing great portions of his time. "You surprised me," wrote Walter Birch‡ to him just before he quitted Pistoia, "by the familiarity you displayed with the literature of our old divines in the letter I had from you almost a year ago." Another remark from the same letter may be added. Landor had been writing to his old school-fellow of the Latin Essay he had in hand, and of the eulogy it would contain of Wordsworth; and "would you believe it," Birch replies, "I inquired for the *Excursion* at Upham's last year, and found that they did not even know that such a book had been published." The poem had been out nearly five years when this letter was written.

\* With some changes and many additions it will be found at the close of his *Poemata et Inscriptiones* (1847).

† *Ante*, p. 210.

‡ In the same letter Birch announces to Landor his marriage, and tells him he has become "rusticated and country-parson-fied" upon a living in Wiltshire which Lord Pembroke had given him. This he changed three years later for a better living in Essex given him by his college, and which he held to his death.

## V. AGAIN AT PISA.

## A BIRTHDAY LETTER TO SOUTHEY : 30TH JANUARY, 1820.

"It appears to me an age since I heard from you, nor have I yet received the new poem of Wordsworth. A poem given by him, as I have just been telling my friend Walter Birch, is like a kingdom given by Alexander or Cyrus. As I myself have been confined by a bilious and nervous fever, I fancied that something of the kind must have happened to you. God forbid. Neither my time nor my life are worth anything; but yours are very precious, and, like the mines of Mexico, have many proprietors. I think my last letter contained a long extract from a poem I have written called 'Catillus and Salia'; but I have not begun the necessary custom of taking any note of what I write about, so that some favorite thought may occur two or three times, and another, more necessary, drop altogether. I suppose the intelligence has reached England that Cicero's book *De Republicâ* has been discovered at Rome by Angelo Mai. I read Cicero with indescribable delight; but I would rather either read or have written almost any one of Wordsworth's later poems than the most celebrated work of Cicero. I have often turned both to his and to yours, sometimes to make my heart, sometimes my spirits, and sometimes my body better; for good poetry and perfect solitude I have always found the best nurses. My brother Robert informs me that he has sent, addressed to you at Longman's, my poem, *Sponsalia Polyxenæ*; \* and, what is of more importance, that he has heard from Mr. Senhouse that you are well. But his letter is dated above three months ago. I sent the poem in June, and wrote either in May or April. You told me in your last that Mrs. Southey had just recovered from a very severe and dangerous illness. I am extremely anxious to hear how she does; and pray give your little boy a kiss for me. This is my birthday; and as I never, as far as I can recollect, slept soundly on its anniversary, I do not flatter myself that I shall to-night. Gray talks of

'Slumbers light that fly the approach of morn.'

Mine are and always were light enough, but instead of 'flying the approach of morn,' they wait for it. I sometimes amuse myself with writing Latin poetry or correcting what I have written, but I read little. Some time or other I propose to finish Dante, which I began about eleven years ago, but wanted perseverance. A twentieth or thirtieth part of what I read was excellent. You cannot say the same of Ariosto. He is a Carnival poet; but he is never very bad. When shall we see your Quaker? Do not let the times make any impression on your writings, and as little as possible on your mind. I think of England as if I were in another world and had lost all personal interest in it. I foresaw and predicted the whole of these calamities when that madman Pitt united the French of all parties by hostility. Men reduced to poverty must be discontented. We wither the tree and complain that it becomes touchwood and catches fire. I shall remain here all the winter, all the spring, and perhaps the summer. So that I cherish the hope of hearing from you more than once before my departure. *Pisa*, January 30."

Southey replies with renewed lamentation over the misfortune of his friend's predilection for Latin verse, of which he never thinks but

\* *Ante*, p. 267. It is the same "little poem" to which he refers in his last-quoted letter, and which he had now privately printed.



as of a great loss to English literature ; speaks of Byron's imitations of Frere in *Beppo* and *Don Juan*, the last of which he denounces as "a foul blot in the literature of his country, an act of high treason in English poetry, for which the author deserves damnation"; and gives news of Wordsworth's doings and his own.

"Wordsworth's 'Peter Bell' has not been sent to you yet, because I have been waiting for other things to accompany it; by itself it would neither be worth carriage nor have any chance of reaching you, unless an opportunity had offered of sending it by a private hand. It will have in company now as many other of his smaller pieces as suffice, with it, to form a third volume of his poems. The last of these portions is now in the press, and my 'Life of Wesley' will be forthcoming nearly at the same time, — in the course of three or four weeks. He desires me to send the whole, having as just a sense of your powers as a poet as you have of his. Wesley and the third volume of Brazil will give form and weight to the parcel; I do not however mean to undervalue them. You will find some very interesting matter in both. I hope also that I shall be able to send some verses of my own upon the king's death. My taste for *ex-officio* verses is not very unlike your own. But you will not be apprehensive that I shall debase myself by the matter; and the manner will interest you as an experiment in versification."

In the same letter, dated March, 1820, there is a sharp protest against Landor's recent praise of one of the South American leaders. "You must have seen some exaggerated accounts of Artigas. He is merely one of the ruffians whom circumstances have brought forward in that miserable part of the world: those of Buenos Ayres being only not so bad as those of Venezuela because they have not had an opportunity as yet of committing as many crimes. A deluge that should sweep those countries clean would be a merciful visitation: such is the character of their present inhabitants, and such the atrocity with which they carry on an internecine warfare."

To this Landor rejoined in May.

"In a few days I shall have despatched for England a volume of Latin poems, which will be printed at the close of the ensuing week. Longman will send you a couple of copies, together with one for Wordsworth. I beg that one of the copies may be presented with my compliments to your uncle Mr. Hill, of whom I have often thought since I had the pleasure of meeting him at Bristol, and to whom the literary world is so much indebted for the strength with which he has supplied you for the History of Brazil. Yet I wish that cursed country had never been discovered, since it withdraws your attention from poetry. The English consider the Portuguese and the negroes in nearly the same point of interest, and all the genius in the world will never make your History a popular work. Now about Artigas. I never read anything about him except in the newspapers; but I conversed one day with an ignorant but acute Swiss who had resided four months at Monte Video and a year at Buenos Ayres. He assured me that A. was more dreaded by the latter city than all the Spaniards and Portuguese united; that while he was at Monte Video A. had destroyed nearly a whole regiment lately arrived from Portugal, and obliged four thousand Portuguese to retreat. Yet he had no money except what arose from the

confiscation of Portuguese property and the sale of licenses to capture their vessels, the whole amount of which in a year could not amount to 20,000 dollars. The greatest force he ever collected was 2,800. Surely then whatever may be the moral character, whatever the political views, of this man, in war no age has produced his superior except J. Caesar and Sertorius. He appears to possess a surprising influence over the near tribes in all directions, particularly about Buenos Ayres and Monte Video. The troops he has beaten and destroyed fought under Lord Wellington and are equal to our own. He has killed of Spanish Americans and Portuguese from seven to ten thousand at different times, with the loss of about 2,000, and was never beaten. The Portuguese are unwilling to attack him when he commands in person, but he is often forced to be absent to collect troops and encourage the provinces in his favor. This man (the Swiss) was intercepted and plundered by his soldiers, but supplied with provisions, a horse, a guide, and allowed to go to Buenos Ayres. I hope the government of Buenos Ayres will conciliate an enemy so formidable: if not, that he will overturn it and exterminate the Portuguese government, than which nothing ever was more iniquitous in its whole system. Foller (the Swiss) corroborates all that Koster says of the mode of levying troops, and the taxes have since been much increased. Floreat quercus Guernica. Adieu. I have a few books which I want to send you. Did not you say that, if directed to the Austrian ambassador, books came to you free? Give me the direction."

Southey's next letter (19th of August) announced that the books so long promised by himself had been despatched: Wordsworth's *Peter Bell* and *Sonnets on the River Duddon*, with his own last volume of the *History of Brazil* and his *Life of Wesley*. It told also of his other labors in history and poetry, the *Peninsular War* and the *Tale of Paraguay*; the last retarded by the *Spenser stanza*, but now resumed once more. It related some of the incidents of the new reign; Scott's baronetcy; his own doctorate at Oxford, where nobody even at his own college remembered him, except the old porter and his wife; the proceedings begun a month before against "the modern *Mesalina*," with the support given her by the devilish newspapers, the moral pestilence of the age; and the beautification of London, which his friend will scarcely know when he returns to it, if the *Catilines* should not first have burnt it down. Finally it told of a *Series of Dialogues* which he proposed to write upon a plan suggested by *Boethius*; and this announcement, as it turned out, was a very memorable one for Landor, whose reply was written in September, and begins with allusion to the books he in the foregoing letter had promised his friend.

#### A BATCH OF OLD BOOKS FOR SOUTHEY.

"My anxiety to receive your last volume of the *Brazilian History*, the *Life of Wesley*, and Wordsworth's poems, is sharpened if possible by the letter I receive to-day. . . . Two of the books I proposed sending to you are folios and heavy. One is *Vincentii Speculum Historiæ*, praised highly by Scaliger, and in which he says things are found which are found nowhere else. I have read a great deal of the book with surprise and satis-



faction. Tell me if you have it; and if not, whether you think it worth the duty. The other folio is Paul Hoste's Treatise on Naval Tactics, which perhaps may amuse your brother. The French pretend that it has taught us everything we know of such matters. It certainly is a scientific work, and contains some pretty vignettes: commendations which the French would naturally place together. The other books are small, and valueless in all other respects than that I have found few of them in the public libraries. They are chiefly modern Latinists, of which some persons, I hear, begin to make collections, among others Mr. Heber."

#### BRAZIL AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIGION.

"I am reading a second time your History of Brazil, — a totally new world to all the literary men in Europe, whatever may be their pretensions. If you had not undertaken the work, it never could have been performed. If my opinion is correct, that barbarism is constituted of three principal things, filth, cruelty, and superstition, the difference is hardly anything between the discoverers and the discovered. But the spirit of discovery, you will argue, proves the superiority. I do not see that. The spirit that induced the American to search for wild animals to eat is more natural, more laudable, and more sagacious than that which propelled the Spaniard and Portuguese to hazard his life and lose his comforts in search of what was more difficult to find and more unsatisfactory when found. The Roman Catholic superstition appears to me infinitely worse than any other species of idolatry, because it has every evil inherent in it which any one of those has, and in addition is more propense to intolerance and idleness. Everything can be done by proxy. Men in Catholic countries pray to God and get children by proxy, and by proxy are damned or saved. The priest even eats and drinks for you at supper, and helps you to a slice of meat by putting into his mouth a piece of bread. A cannibal eats you because he is hungry or because he hates you; a Catholic kills you upon a full stomach for your own good and to please God. How very few men are not barbarous! how very few are free from cruel actions even towards those whom they would be the happier for loving!"

Next he speaks — with no more thought of *Childe Harold*, and of the mastery of the Spenser stanza exhibited by its writer, than if there had been no such poem or poet in that century —

#### OF THE SPENSER STANZA AND OF WORDSWORTH.

"You delight me by saying that you must take up the poems which have been so long on hand. The stanza of Spenser is less difficult to you than to any one. It has made poets, and ought not to deter one. How infinitely more pure is Thomson in his admirable *Castle of Indolence* than elsewhere and Shenstone in his *Schoolmistress*! How greatly has Wordsworth surpassed the noblest passages of Spenser himself in his *Laodamia*! The stanza is not new to you, and you possess a copiousness and richness of language such as few poets have possessed. I hope Wordsworth will write no more short poems until he has finished his *Recluse*. If our country must fall, let her expire in the arms of genius. France, in all her troubles, has produced no writers fit to compose the title-page of an almanac, and the period has been thirty years. Athens had her Demosthenes and her Aristoteles, Rome her Cicero. Modern ages indeed have produced no great prose-writers, but in poets we far surpass the ancients: a position which half a century ago

was untenable is now unassailable. Let those who have rendered it so add to its outworks."

#### A RECOLLECTION OF BATH.

"I shall never see London again. I never saw it willingly. But surely nothing can make a cold brick-kiln a fine city. The Circus in Bath is the most perfect thing I have seen, or shall see; but the inhabitants have injured it by cutting down the windows to the floor. The Parades have been deprived of their balusters, and iron palisades substituted. Still, the rest of Europe has nothing equal to them. The northern part of Queen's Square was never surmounted by balusters on the roof-wall, and we see a broken-backed roof called a Bath roof: yet London and Paris have nothing so fine. The Crescent, if streets joined the two extremities, without roads between, would be perfect; it is matchless in other places. The architecture of Pulteney Street does not quite please me, and perhaps is little better than Portland Place. I know not what they have been doing in your capital; but unless they open a street from St. Paul's across the Thames, the whole width of the church's length, they may as well do nothing."

#### SOUTHEY'S DOCTORATE AT OXFORD.

"The University of Oxford ought to purchase an estate for you in the country, as a reward for becoming one of its doctors. How extremely few are the occasions when honorary and prostituted are not one and the same! Learned bodies, and above all those in which divinity and morals are professed, should guard against this. The very division into commoners and gentleman-commoners in this age is most scandalous and offensive. In Cambridge the name is less detestable, but the thing not less invidious. Learning and virtue should alone distinguish young men, or indeed old ones. . . . Your letter has made me think again, not of Christchurch walk, but of my favorite Magdalen and the half-hidden Cherwell."

At the close of October, Southey wrote again, and the whole of his letter should be given. It is interesting still, much of it too curious to be lost; and beside what it tells of Landor's story or illustrates of the character of both the friends, it is necessary to explain what will follow.

#### SOUTHEY TO LANDOR: 29TH OCTOBER, 1820.

"I hope you have received the books long ago; they were 'shipped by the grace of God in good order and well-conditioned in and upon the good ship called the Cosmopolite, George Holland, master, June 27th,' according to the invoice, which has been sent to me since I wrote to you last.

"Have you heard of Sir Charles Wolseley's letter to Lord Castlereagh? I fell upon it to-day in the *Times*, and copy for your astonishment this paragraph: 'I beg leave to inform your lordship that, if his Majesty's government will allow me a month's leave of absence from my present place of confinement, I will undertake to be of the utmost service to her Majesty in the pending prosecution against her, by going from hence to Como, where during the year 1817 I lived several months with my family; and from that circumstance, and being acquainted with several people who were employed by the queen, I have an opportunity of getting at evidence that would be of the greatest consequence, that no Englishman but myself and a Mr. Walter Landon, who is now in Italy, can have had the same opportunity of



knowing.' You probably know that one of Brougham's brothers has been on the Continent beating up for witnesses. If this letter had appeared in time, no doubt he would have gone in search of you, and I should like to have been present at the interview. Sir Ch. W. must be half crazy. We may judge how capable he is of forming a sane opinion upon any subject, when he has so topsy-turvy a recollection of your knowledge upon this. His letter, of course, has not obtained the slightest notice, and therefore none can be needful on your part. Had the mention of your name been such as in any way to compromise you, I should without hesitation have written to the newspapers.

"Most persons seem to apprehend that this trial will not terminate without some violent explosion. Certain it is that every possible art is used for making the mob rise in open rebellion. But though it is very possible to foresee the consequence of public opinions, public madness must baffle all foresight; and this is an absolute insanity. It was well observed by an acquaintance of mine the other day, upon hearing that Bedlam was to be enlarged, 'Enlarge Bedlam, indeed! better build a wall round London!'

"The course of events in Spain and Portugal may perhaps lead to an union of the two kingdoms, but not I think as *kingdoms*. I have long thought that the tendency of revolution in the Peninsula was to break it up into its old subdivisions, give to each province its own cortes and its own *fueros*, and unite them in a federal compact like the Americans. And if there were no rubs in the way, and if the example could do no one harm in other countries, this might be desired. Alas, neither the Bourbons nor the Braganzas are worth a wish. As yet it is not known what course the king of Portugal will take: probably he must yield to what he cannot oppose, and what in fact is both reasonable and right, considering the monstrous misgovernment which has so long prevailed. But concessions made under such circumstances are only likely to retard the catastrophe, not to alter it. In the present state of Europe the abuse of monarchy tends to produce democracy; and democracy, which is more certain to produce immediate and more intolerable abuse, brings on military despotism. The first book which I shall have to send you will contain my speculations upon the progress of society, in the form of dialogue. This is evidently one of the climacteric periods of the world. I am not afraid of the issue of the crisis in England, where we have so much at stake, that is, where we have most to lose and least to gain. In Italy, whatever may happen, you will be 'only a lodger.' It is well, however, that we are not as young as we were at the commencement of the French Revolution. For my part I look on with a wholesome but not impatient interest; knowing perfectly what end to wish for, but so doubtful respecting the means that I am well content to trust Providence: and in that confidence I rest.

"I have none of the books which you mention, and I shall prize them when they arrive. Direct them to Longman's care. Every day I expect the first proof of my Peninsular War. The leaves are falling fast. We have now long evenings, and I have a long season of uninterrupted work before me; with, thank God, good health and fair spirits for the prospect. God bless you. Yours affectionately, R. S."

Sir Charles Wolseley was sufficiently notorious in those days, but now nobody remembers him. Few of us have even read about the meeting of fifteen thousand non-electors in the summer of 1819, who elected him their "legislatorial attorney and representative for Bir-

mingham"; and the arrest for sedition that followed, or the sentence of imprisonment he was still undergoing while Southey wrote, interests no one now. But we know all of us still too well what generally had characterized that infamous year of Six-acts and Peterloo-riots to be very tolerant of the eagerness of one of its radical heroes thus to make terms with Castlereagh for a trip out of jail into Italy as a spy and informer in even the interest of the unfortunate queen. Landor saw the thing apparently in that light, and cared no longer to remember what once he had been so ready to relate of her alleged amusements on the Lake of Como. Whether strictly she were guilty or innocent had in truth ceased to be the question by this time. The great body of the people had declared upon her side; and whatever Landor's former statements or the use made of them might have been, in what he now sent to one of her hottest partisans in society, to be published by her most powerful advocate in the press, he was guilty of nothing for which he had call to be ashamed.

His next letter to Southey, written in the month (November, 1820) when the bill of pains and penalties had to be abandoned, tells what he did; and as it was done at the moment of receiving Wolseley's letter, by the time Southey knew it all the readers of the *Times* knew it too, and what he would fain even then have prevented was past recall.

"I had hardly given myself time to read your letter when I wrote the following to the editor of the *Times*, and enclosed a copy of it to Dr. Parr. As there is a possibility that the editor of the *Times* may not insert my letter, I send you a copy of it.

"SIR, — In perfect reliance on your justice and integrity I entertain no doubt that you will insert in an early number of your paper the following paragraph. I have received this day an extract from a letter addressed by Sir Ch. Wolseley to Lord Castlereagh, and inserted in the *Times*, containing these words: "I have an opportunity of getting at evidence that would be of the greatest consequence, that no Englishman but myself and a Mr. Walter Landon, who is now in Italy, can have had the same opportunity of knowing." Sir, whatever I may have heard relating to the queen, I know nothing positive, and never made a single inquiry that could either inculpate or acquit her in the cause now pending. Were she engaged, to my knowledge, in correspondence with the enemies of the country, it would be my duty to inform the king's ministers; but the secrets of the bedchamber and the *escritoire* have never been the subject of my investigation. An extreme anxiety to deliver my name from all contact with such persons as either formed or directed the committee at Milan urges me to publish this avowal, no less than the letter of Sir Ch. Wolseley. During my residence on the Lake of Como my time was totally occupied in literary pursuits; and I believe no man of that character was ever thought worthy of employment by the present administration. Added to which, I was insulted by an Italian domestic of the queen, and I demanded from her in vain the punishment of the aggressor. This alone, which might excite and keep alive the most active resentment in many others, would impose eternal silence on me. Whether such is or ought to be my character, the queen's servants may learn from Dr. Parr and the king's from Mr. Southey, two friends of whom I should find it difficult to say whether they are more firmly attached to me or more affectionately beloved. I desire that in future the name of a Mr. Walter Landon may not be united with a Sir Ch. Wolseley. I am, sir, &c., WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR."

"I lament that Parr should take so active a part in favor of that woman. Never did I entertain a doubt of her guilt and infamy; but those wretches are more guilty and more infamous who employ false keys in bedrooms and *escritoires*. Such is the intelligence we read here of the Milan committee.



God forbid that any Englishman should have employed this Ompteda on so scandalous and abominable an action. Had Brougham's brother entered my house, the interview would have been short, and both standing. I admire the impudence of Wolseley. He attempted to defend the doings of the princess, but never hinted a thought of her innocence when I constantly represented her what all Italy knows her to be, not indeed with legal proofs (such are almost impossible in similar cases), but according to all appearances year after year. Yet if a court of justice called on me to give evidence, I should give my evidence according to the orders and spirit of our laws, and say that, not knowing her guilty, I am not authorized to prejudice her: proofs alone constitute guilt. If you have interest with the editor of the *Courier*, and he admits what is impartial and honest, I should be heartily glad to see inserted in that paper the letter I address to the editor of the *Times*."

In the same letter he describes some of the results of the Holy Alliance, then in full action on the Continent; and says he has been trying his hand against it in an oration written in Italian!

#### THE MOVEMENT FOR REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS.

"I am delighted both at the spirit and the wisdom of Spain, Portugal, and Naples. They recur to old and wise institutions, and defeat by this recurrence the madness both of monarchical and democratical ambition. I am printing at Naples a paper to show the present state of representative government. I lay down only two principles: one, that there are no *degrees* of liberty, and that *few* representatives are enough; the other, that whatever nation has really its representatives is free, whatever has not is not. Although I would not, in England, destroy (for I tremble at a void in all things) the House of Peers, I would by no means recommend the erection of one where institutions have grown up without it. The Senate was the subversion of Rome by its cupidity and injustice; and the House of Lords ruined the English government by its blind acquiescence in the outrages of Charles I. I would wish to see a government where no man or body of men has interests opposite to or beyond the interests of the people. But in politics how many articles of faith ought to be held in secret! I will wait for my sheet of Italian, and send it with the other books. You perhaps will think it intemperate; in England it would be so, but England has a government to defend, Naples is creating one; England is safe and unassailable, Naples is threatened and insecure. Added to which, it is necessary on the Continent to warn the representative government and the despotic, and to persuade them, if possible, to form a league for their mutual defence. In your letter you say nothing of your little boy, yet there is no intemperate weather that I do not think of him."

#### AN OBJECTION TO PETER BELL.

"I received the books about six weeks ago, if my recollection is right, and wrote immediately to Wordsworth a letter of thanks, waiting to hear from you whether I might send the heavy folios. They shall be despatched by the first English ship from Leghorn. . . . In whatever Wordsworth writes there is admirable poetry; but I wish he had omitted all that precedes 'There was a time' (p. 9) in Peter Bell. The first poet that ever wrote was not a more original poet than he is, and the best is hardly a greater."

One may see a little personal weakness in that objection. A whole half of the famous prologue he would have dropped, and among the lines so condemned are these : —

“Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,  
Great Jove is full of stately bowers;  
But these, and all that they contain,  
What are they to that tiny grain,  
That little earth of ours?”

Very much were they still, just now indeed the little earth itself not nearly so much, to a man who lived his life in the remote far more than in the near ; whose mind habitually dwelt in those regions of imagination which the homelier poet here designedly had abandoned ; who in his ardor for classic forms was even ready to restrict himself to classic speech ; and whose volume of poems and idyls about ancient deities and heroes, composed in one of the languages of antiquity and despatched to England before that letter was written, reached Keswick almost at the very time when Peter Bell and his adventures with his ass made their entrance into Pisa. Southey was writing at the time the preface to his *Vision of Judgment* in which he made his onslaught on the satanic school, and a passage from Landor's Latin essay came in with apt enforcement of his bitter charges against Byron.\* Yet neither Latin essay nor Latin poems were grateful to him. At both of them, as at his friend's objection to the Wordsworth prologue, he doubtless gravely shook his head, and gave expression once again to his never-ceasing regret that Landor could write so well in a language not comparable to his own.

Some of these matters find allusion in his next letter, which bears date the 8th February, 1821, and which I shall probably be thanked for not suppressing.

“I have received your Latin volume, and in cutting open the leaves (while the other contents of the parcel are left unexamined) I find my own name mentioned in prose and verse in that manner which brings with it the greatest gratification at present, and will bear with it the greatest weight hereafter.

“I am printing my *History of the Peninsular War*. And I am endeavoring to find how to send you a poem which will be published in about a fort-

\* I will quote the passage. It is interesting in itself; underlying its reference to Byron and his eulogists is an important truth too often disregarded; and it is a good specimen of the style as well as matter of the essay. “Summi poetæ in omni poetarum sæculo viri fuerunt probi: in nostris id vidimus et videmus; neque alius est error a veritate longius quam magna ingenia magnis necessario corrumpi vitiis. Secundo plerique posthabent primum, hi malignitate, illi ignorantia; et quum aliquem inveniunt styli morumque vitiis notatum, nec infectum tamen nec in libris edendis parcum, cum prædicant, stipant, occupant, amplectuntur. Si mores aliquantulum vellet corrigere, si stylum curare paululum, si fervido ingenio temperare, si moræ tantillum interponere, tum ingens nescio quid et verè epicum, quadraginta annos natus, proeuderet. Ignorant verò febriculis non indicari vires, impatientiam ab imbecillitate non differre: ignorant a levi homine et inconstante multa fortasse scribi posse plusquam mediocria, nihil compositum, arduum, æternum.” *Poemata et Inscriptiones* (1847), pp. 285, 286. The title of the essay Landor changed in the later edition from “De Cultu atque Usu Latini Sermonis” to “Quæstio quamobrem Poetæ Latini Recentiores minus legantur.”



night. The title is *A Vision of Judgment*: the personage brought to judgment is the late king; and the verse is a metre constructed in imitation of the hexameter. The principle of adaptation is, that, as by the Germans, the trochee is used for the spondee; with the further alteration of employing any foot of one or two or three syllables in the first place in the verse (for the sake of beginning with a short syllable), and occasionally, but with a rarer license, in the second, third, or fourth place. I have satisfied my own ear, and that of every person, learned or unlearned, upon whom the measure has as yet been tried. There is no one of whose opinion I stand so much in doubt as of yours, for you have made yourself 'an antique Roman' in these things; take, however, the opening of the poem:—

‘T was at that sober hour when the light of day is receding,  
And from surrounding things the hues wherewith day has adorned them  
Fade, like the hopes of youth, till the beauty of earth is departed,’ &c.

You have here a sample\* of the measure. The poem is long enough for the reader to become accustomed to it, and lose the first sense of its strangeness. It is something more than six hundred lines. I expect a hurricane of abuse,—hurricane-like, from all quarters; for among the worthies of the late reign I have placed neither Pitt nor Fox. The spirits whom I have confronted with the king are Wilkes, Junius, and Washington. If you can tolerate the measure, the rest will be sufficiently in accord with your feelings. I shall see if I can get a copy sent to you through the Foreign Office.

“My family, thank God, are well; but I have recently sustained a great shock in the death of my poor friend Nash, who was with me at Como, and who, at home and abroad, had spent more than one year out of the last four with me. My little boy thrives, and is a fine creature. These are such precarious blessings that I do not inquire concerning yours without some degree of fear.

“Your letter was inserted in the *Times*. Some parts of it you would have altered if you had seen fair statements of the case. The madness is now abating; still, this is the time for the Catholics to attempt the re-establishment of their religion; for if the people of England choose to have such a queen, they cannot possibly object to the whore of Babylon. Our ministers want decision and firmness, but I believe it is not possible for men to act with better intentions, nor more uprightly. The Whigs are acting as basely as they did in the days of Titus Oates. God bless you. R. S.”

Landor replied on the 12th of March, and refers to another child, a daughter, recently born to him. This event had been announced to his mother on the 6th of the March preceding (1820) as having taken place at seven o'clock that evening. “It is the custom at Pisa to carry the children to be baptized the very day of their birth, but I shall not pay any attention to such foolery.” He delayed it, as we shall see, till after the date of his present letter to Southey.

#### HIS CHILDREN : MARCH, 1821.

“I hear with great delight that your little boy thrives. My two creatures have caught a cough from a servant-maid, but are recovering, dear hearts. I caught it from them.”

\* Thirty-two lines are thus given; but as they do not differ from the opening of the poem as printed, it was not necessary to repeat them here.

## SOUTHEY'S VISION OF JUDGMENT : GEORGE III., JUNIUS, AND WASHINGTON.

"Your hexameters have sharpened my appetite for the remainder. As I know nothing of German, it is the first time I ever read any, and only remember that you once repeated a single sentence. I am afraid the poetry has made me a convert to the measure. You manage it with wonderful address, and there is only one verse that I found necessary to read twice: 'For it tells of mortality always,' &c.

"I pitied more sincerely than many of the courtiers the dreadful affliction of the late king, but I never felt much respect or esteem for him: first, because he was too prompt in undertaking the American and French war, the one most nefarious, the other most impolitic; and because he pocketed from the duchy of Cornwall the property of his son, and permitted the affair to come before Parliament under so shallow a pretext as that of a claim for the expenses of his education. He was also insincere. The Marquis of Rockingham told Lord Shelburne, Lord Shelburne told Colonel Barry, and Colonel Barry told me, the following anecdote. Lord Buckingham had never been cordially or indeed more than coldly received by him, and was greatly surprised and gratified at a favorable change of manner. A few days afterwards he was deprived of office. He mentioned (I forget to whom) the king's cordiality on such a day, and it was discovered that on *that very morning* it was resolved to deprive him of his place. Parr told me that he had heard the same anecdote, and I think he added from Fox. I believe Junius to be Burke, well knowing the versatility of his style, and observing that neither he nor his friends are mentioned in the letters. The objection that they are too uniformly correct and elegant weighs lightly with me. He had not room for extravagance in the compass of a letter; he was forced into consistency and compactness. It is reported with great confidence that Sir Joshua Reynolds prevailed with him to correct his discourses. Now any one of these is surely worth all the letters of Junius both for materials and workmanship. I tremble at the vicinity of such a rascal as Wilkes to Washington. I believe Washington to excel both in political and military wisdom all men except Gustavus Adolphus. Surely never had human being such difficulties to overcome; and how difficult, how nearly impossible, how utterly so to any but himself, to give ductility to such drossy materials!"

## ROMAN CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION AND RADICAL REFORM.

"I entertain no fear whatever that the woman of Cernobbio will introduce her sister of Babylon. That bloated ringdropper, that bastard of milliner and perfumer, has long ago lost her charms for Englishmen. Surely it is absurd to deprive men of a seat in Parliament because they believe in transubstantiation. It is quite enough if they swear that they will obey no person whatever in any act opposing the authority of king and Parliament. For my own part I could just as easily believe that I seal this letter with a god, as that I eat and drink one. Now the English Church says that 'the body and blood of Christ are *verily and indeed* taken in the Lord's Supper.' It is childish to draw any line between two absurdities so enormous. I am firmly of opinion that no danger whatever can arise to England from the reception of the Catholics into Parliament, nor (however odious the name has become) from a radical reform. In the last years of the war I would have opposed such a measure as strenuously as any of the ministers, knowing the infatuation of some men in favor of Bonaparte, and the indifference of others to any calamity or disgrace that the nation might suffer, provided



they could come into the possession of wealth and power. I rejoiced in the Battle of Waterloo, but I dreaded from that moment the reaction under which the Continent groans. Austria promised to Lombardy a representative government, and Prussia promised it to all the states of that crown. How basely have the people been deceived! Sicily had begun to respire under a liberal government. The king abrogated the whole system. His troops, who saw the good effects of it, no sooner returned into Italy than the whole body of the officers united with those they had lately fought against, and at present there are not ten families in Naples even suspected of any propensity towards despotism."

#### ORATIONS IN ITALIAN AGAINST THE HOLY ALLIANCE.

"I have written three orations exposing the duplicity of the *Alleati Santi* (as the Neapolitans call them), the danger to which all constitutional governments are exposed, and the inexpediency, not to say impossibility, of forming a House of Lords. With due praises to the moral character of the English aristocracy, I have remarked that their two most memorable acts are their opposition to the repeal of the slave-trade, and their miserable weakness and indecision in the affair of the queen. I have observed that to form a House of Lords materials are required which are not to be found anywhere in Europe, out of England, not even in Venice; that they must be of long growth, strong fibre, great girth, and well seasoned. Much of the two first editions was omitted by a most indiscreet and foolish editor. I have ordered another to be printed, with a third letter. The first edition was distributed gratis; of the second I know nothing but its mere existence in the same incomplete form. I was surprised and vexed that the box of books had not left Leghorn, and am now pleased that I may enclose some copies of this work."

That is one of his works of which there is now no trace, except in passages of his later dialogues; and the letter closes with mention of another of his perished undertakings. Upon the questions of poetry and criticism opened up in Wordsworth's prefaces he had planned a Latin essay supplementary to the treatise prefixed to his Latin poems; and "I have finished," he tells Southey, "my translation of Wordsworth's criticisms, saying in the preface that I had taken whatever I wanted from him, with the same liberty as a son eats and drinks in his father's house . . . I wish," he abruptly adds, "I had some thousand pounds to spare, as I had when the Spaniards rose against Bonaparte, that what I offered to them I might offer to the Neapolitans." The revolt at Naples, it is hardly necessary to add, was but one of the series of demands for representative government that arose in various parts of the Continent in that and the preceding year, and to which Landor's sympathy had been eagerly offered in the "orations" composed, printed, and circulated during the last weeks of his residence at Pisa. It was a natural reaction against the repressive system established on the fall of Napoleon, and, though in itself short-lived, was not without permanent results. Very soon thrust down again in Spain, in Portugal, in Naples, in Piedmont, even in Turkey, to which the movement had extended, it led directly to the independence of Brazil, to the recognition by England of the South American

republics, and to the Greek revolution. In the excitements caused by these events no man shared more largely than Landor.

## VI. ON THE WAY TO FLORENCE.

In April, 1821, resolved not to pass that summer at Pisa, Landor had come to Florence in search of a house. A letter from his mother had reached him as he started on his journey, and from Florence he answered it. She had told him that there could not now be many more days for her at Ipsley, which would soon have to prepare for its new master. But he says nay to that, and prays that many more summers there may yet be hers.

"The misery of not being able to see you is by far the greatest I have ever suffered. Never shall I forget the thousand acts of kindness and affection I have received from you from my earliest to my latest days. I have deferred the christening of my little daughter because I wished to have one to be named after you, and to whom I might request you to be godmother. As perhaps I may never have another, I shall call my little Julia by the name of Julia Elizabeth Savage Landor, and with your permission will engage some one of Julia's English friends to represent you. This is the first time I was ever a whole day without seeing Arnold. I wonder what his thoughts are upon the occasion. Mine are a great deal more about him than about the house I must look for. He is of all living creatures the most engaging, and already repeats ten of the most beautiful pieces of Italian poetry. The honest priest his master says he is a miracle and a marvel, and exceeds in abilities all he ever saw or heard of. He turns into ridicule every person that speaks bad Italian. What a pity it is that such divine creatures should ever be men and subject to regrets and sorrows! Julia is thin and weak, but is without any particular complaint, and is recommended to change the air for the summer, as Pisa lies low and is abandoned by all the inhabitants in the warm season. There are some Austrians in Florence, but not many. They are a great annoyance wherever they go; in fact, foreign soldiers are nowhere favorites."

Well might he so acknowledge the letter she had written to him, for it told him what the result had been of her always tender and proud thought of him, as well as of all her prudent savings in the six years that had passed since he quitted England. "Whenever I die you will find by my will that the arrears which belong to me from the Llanthony property I have given up to you, as it may the sooner lessen your embarrassment; and I hope in time you will come and spend the remainder of your life in this country where you have many well-wishers, which some time or other you will be convinced of. By my retired way of living I have been enabled to provide comfortably for your sisters; and whenever I leave this world you will find your property improved by my having kept all in good repair." She describes the most recent purchases made by her for the various farms, and pleasantly adds: "As I cut no timber for the repairs, I depend on you, for my sake, not to cut any down, as the timber is the beauty of Ipsley." This was a point of character with her. Re-



plying afterwards to that Florence letter of his, she hopes the place may suit him better than Pisa ; and indeed she thinks it may be a healthy situation enough ; but as for beauty, "no place can be truly beautiful without fine trees, which I suppose in Italy you seldom see."

Her letters, shrewd in all they observe upon, and homely in most of their applications, are full of character of this kind. Excellent in their descriptions of the country, and models of good sense and cleverness in everything pertaining to the cultivation of her farms, they contain little politics and less literature ; yet never anything as to either that her son might not read with a smile. "Doctor Parr," she says in one of them, after describing with a whimsical good-humor the excitement about the queen, — "Doctor Parr is made her domestic chaplain. I think at his time of life he might have been quiet at home." In another she relates her having met "Mr. Moore the poet, who speaks very highly of your *Count Julian*, which he had been reading and was quite delighted with." In a third she tells him of the king's death and of the Duke of Kent's, reading him a motherly lecture on the fact that the duke's had been caused by "sitting in wet boots and taking cold." She never names Llanthony as by possibility to be ever his future home, but dwells always upon Ipsley. There is a very pleasing letter where she describes the gardens there and the beauty of them, and in which she hopes, it being so much more retired than Tachbrooke, it will be his residence for a part of every year when he returns. Some of the pictures at Llanthony he had been fondest of, she tells him, had been bought for him by his brother Henry, and they were now placed at Ipsley as heir-looms. "For I do so wish you, dear Walter," she adds with a touching simplicity, "some time hence to be able to return and find as much pleasure here as I have done these many years." That was two years before she announced to him the result of her generous savings ; and in the letter of the present year containing it and lately quoted, there is a mention of the last book he had sent over to her which in its homely way might have convinced him, as he was already beginning even to think for himself, that what he gained bore no proportion to what he lost by writing his poetry in the Latin tongue. After telling him that she expects at her age soon to leave the world, that she is now seventy-seven, and had enjoyed health so long she could not expect it much longer, she tells him the book he had sent her had arrived safely, "and is thought by the learned to be a very delightful book ; but one cannot read it, to understand it, one's self."

Landor wrote two more letters to Southey before he finally pitched his tent in Florence, and from these the following extracts are given. The "little work" referred to, of which I have found no other existing trace, was a copy in English of his Italian orations against the Holy Alliance.

## MOVEMENT AGAINST THE CONTINENTAL DESPOTISMS: RISING OF THE GREEKS.

"At last the box of books is on its way to England, after a parcel, containing twenty-four volumes, had been robbed from the house at Leghorn to which they were consigned. There were some suspicions as to the thief, and ten of the worst are since discovered. Nistri, who bound them, saw them in a shop at Pisa, too late, however, to send them with the rest. I have requested Longman to open the box, and to print what I have written on the present state of constitutional governments. The system of Bonaparte seems to be adopted by Russia and Austria; and I am convinced that, unless our government is both more energetic and more liberal, no particle of sound and rational government will remain in Europe. I hope no difference of opinion will prevent Longman from publishing my little work, although a part of its interest may be lost by the sudden change in the affairs of Naples. I distrusted the people in office there; my praises were exhortations. I did not think it proper to omit anything I had written. What is durable may be founded on what is transitory. There are at Pisa nearly two hundred young Greeks studying medicine, or what is called humanity, but mostly medicine. One of these visited me, after reading what I had written on the affairs of Naples, and he alone was intrusted with the secret of the Greek insurrection. I allude to it in a sentence in the second or third part. No other man in Italy knew anything of the design. Few of the Greeks are younger than twenty-five or thirty, and they are remarkably studious. From what I can collect, the Greeks were treated by the Turkish government with great humanity and justice, and their impositions were extremely light. Woe betide them if they fall under Austria, Russia, or any other power. I am told that the people of the Adriatic Islands are extremely discontented under England. I know not how it happens, but England certainly is more hated than any other power, ancient or modern, by her colonies and dependencies. Nothing can exceed the rage of the Italians at what they call the perfidy of England towards Naples. I see no perfidy; I see much cowardice and baseness, and such as will end in war. If Russia is permitted to possess anything either in the Adriatic or Mediterranean, she will be able to turn the balance of power against us in that quarter. And that she would have permitted the aggrandizement of Austria without the certainty of an equivalent is improbable in the last degree. To have permitted this collusion is one among the crimes against humanity which will cause the downfall of England. The people of Tuscany are contented; they live under a mild and most amiable prince. Yet Austria sends 10,000 troops to live at Florence, and the number for all Italy is to be 125,000. Five regiments are enough to keep all Italy in subjection: nothing can exceed the cowardice of this people."

## SOUTHEY'S PROPOSED DIALOGUES.

"I have not received your dialogues, which I look for anxiously. We are sailing, I think, in different directions. *'Vela dare atque iterare cursus cogor relictos,'* by the winds that predominate here. God grant that one or the other of us may be able to do some good. All hope that England can ever be what she was before the administration of Pitt is vain and futile. There never was a time when her inhabitants were more vicious, more unhappy, or more divided. They act with all the folly and desperation of men who have nothing left, neither goods nor credit. Your judgments, formed



on the spot, must be more correct than mine. What is going on throughout the Continent seems to be intended by Providence for the population of America."

#### INSECURITY OF LETTERS.

"I am inclined to believe that you have written to me since my last from Pisa, not however without some suspicion that this among others may have miscarried. The Neapolitan war is a sufficient plea for the roguery of certain men here, who indulge their curiosity and malice under the mask of duty. There is not a viler scoundrel than a certain Fossombronio, formerly a surveyor, now minister of the foreign affairs. I have collected various anecdotes of this fellow, formerly a violent partisan of the French, and among the rest his habit of detaining the letters of those foreigners who, from their acquirements or virtues, may reasonably be suspected of the power and inclination to treat him as he deserves. Remittances from bankers have been detained a month or more at his office."

#### SUPPRESSION OF HIS ORATIONS AGAINST THE HOLY ALLIANCE.

"Longman has not thought it worth his while to give me any information about the work I sent to be printed. I am very sorry for it, as it contains remarks of great utility and perfect novelty, useful indeed at all times, but most materially so at the present. I am informed that I should have done better if I had sent it to Mawman, who would have executed it gladly."

#### GEORGE THE FOURTH'S CORONATION.

"I am happy to understand that the coronation has been performed without any popular disturbance. Surely if that woman whom the ministers are pleased to call queen continues to excite disturbances, she will be at last coerced. Were I a magistrate, I should not hesitate to commit her to Bridewell. I hope to hear that you have written an ode on the coronation. In itself a coronation can raise but small enthusiasm in a poet: the circumstances are everything, and never were they so momentous as now."

#### COURT OF THE GRAND DUKE OF TUSCANY.

"I cannot sleep for the Greeks. They disturb my rest more than the Sultan's, but with very different sensations. On the news of Bonaparte's death the festivities at court were suspended. His brother-in-law, Borghese, did not however put on mourning. He resides entirely at Florence. The grand duke was persuaded by his ministers to marry the sister of his son's wife, who was also desirous that, if he married any one, it should be her. She is far from beautiful, and the bridegroom appears melancholy. In fact he loved the Duchess of Lucca's daughter, a sweet, amiable, and lovely girl. The ministers must have been fools, or something worse, to persuade him: for neither his son's wife, nor her sister the Queen of Spain, has children. Yet they pretended it was to secure the succession in his family, the hereditary prince being sickly. In fact, it was to secure their own power, — the secret of policy in all ministers."

#### PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND SALARIES IN ENGLAND.

"We have had a few days of intense heat, but, I thank God, it has not affected the children. I wish to hear what you are doing. All the accounts

I received from England are distressing, particularly the report made by the committee of the House of Commons on the state of the landed interest. A reduction is spoken of in the payment of public offices of fifteen per cent in the quarter. Now provisions being fifteen per cent cheaper than when these places were given, this is no reduction at all. My opinion is that no offices, except the kingly and the judges, should exceed £1,500 a year. I would give the chancellor £3,000, the judges £2,500. Ambassadors should be chosen from elevated and wealthy men, as elsewhere. That commissaries and consuls should be better paid than admirals and generals would be utterly incredible, if anything like reason were admitted into our expenditure. Farewell, and pray let me hear soon from you. When will Wordsworth publish the remainder of his great poem?"

Before Southey replied on that latter point, Wordsworth had himself answered Landor's question. His letter was dated at the beginning of September, 1821, and spoke of both the published and the unpublished portion of his celebrated poem. "The *Excursion* is proud of your approbation. The *Recluse* has had a long sleep, save in my thoughts. My manuscripts are so ill-penned and blurred that they are useless to all but myself: and at present I cannot face them. But if my stomach can be preserved in tolerable order, I hope you will hear of me again, in the character chosen for the title of that poem." Not simply to tell Landor this, however, but to speak of the Latin poems and dissertation,\* and explain why they had not earlier been acknowledged, was the principal intent of Wordsworth's letter. He had been suffering from an irritation in his eyes that had disabled him lately from reading and writing, but he had not been unmindful or ungrateful; and chary as he was of praising even those among contemporary poets who had the strongest claims on his personal regard, we are entitled fairly to accept as of peculiar significance and weight what he now said to Landor of the author of *Gebir* and *Count Julian*.

"It is high time I should thank you for the honorable mention you have made of me. It could not but be grateful to me to be praised by a poet *who has written verses of which I would rather have been the author than of any produced in our time*. And what I now thus write to you I have frequently said to many."

Of the Latin poems he afterwards speaks, and, with a simple gravity not unamusing, upholds as a time-honored custom the habit of writers writing in their native tongue. He had felt himself greatly honored by the present of Landor's book. "It arrived at a time when I had the use of my eyes for reading, and with great pleasure did I employ them in the perusal of the dissertation annexed, which I read several times. The poems themselves, however, I have not been able to look into, for I was seized with a fit of composition at that time, and deferred the pleasure to which they invited me till I could give them an undivided attention. But alas! the

\* See *ante*, pp. 278, 279, 288.



complaint in my eyes, to which I have been occasionally subject for several years past, suddenly returned ; and I have since suffered from it as already mentioned." Referring then to the somewhat singular circumstances in which they were living at Rydal Mount, in solitude during nearly nine months of the year, and for the rest in a round of engagements, he says that having nobody near him that reads Latin he can only speak of the essay from recollection ; but Landor will not perhaps feel surprised to be told that he differs in opinion as to the propriety of the Latin language being used by moderns for works of taste and imagination. "Miserable would have been the lot of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch, if they had preferred the Latin to their mother tongue (there is, by the by, a Latin translation of Dante which you do not seem to know) ; and what could Milton, who was surely no mean master of Latin, have made of his *Paradise Lost*, had that vehicle been employed instead of the language of the Thames and Severn ! Should we even admit that all modern dialects are comparatively changeable, and therefore limited in their efficacy, may not the sentiment which Milton so pleasingly expresses when he says he is content to be read in his native isle only, be extended to durability ? and is it not more desirable to be read with affection and pride and familiarity for five hundred years by all orders of minds and all ranks of people, in your native tongue, than only by a few scattered scholars for the space of three thousand ? My frequent infirmity moreover gives me an especial right to urge this argument. Had your Idylliums been in English, I should long ere this have been as well acquainted with them as with your *Gebir* and with your other poems ; and now I know not how long they may remain to me a sealed book."

Particular points in the dissertation then recur to him, as, warned by his failing sight, he proceeds to dictate the remainder of his letter to Mrs. Wordsworth. A hundred things he had met with in it which fell in with his own sentiments and judgments ; but there were also many he should like to talk over with Landor. He thinks the arrangement or "ordonnance" of the essay might be improved ; and that several of its separate remarks, though perfectly just, as in particular those upon Virgil, being yet details that obstruct the view of the whole, would perhaps have been better placed in notes or an appendix. "Vincent Bourne surely is not so great a favorite with you as he ought to be. Though I acknowledge there is ground for your objection upon the score of ultra-concinnity (a queer word for a female pen, Mrs. Wordsworth has boggled at it), yet this applies only to a certain portion of his longs and shorts. Are you not also penurious in your praise of Gray ? The fragment at the commencement of his fourth book in which he laments the death of West, in cadence and sentiment touches me in a manner for which I am grateful. The first book also of the same poem appears to me as well executed as anything of that kind is likely to be. Is not

there a speech of Solon to which the concluding couplet of Gray's sonnet bears a more pointed resemblance than to any of the passages you have quoted? He was told not to grieve for the loss of his son, as tears would be of no avail. 'And for that very reason,' replied he, 'do I weep.'"

Not many days after receiving this letter\* Landor had succeeded in settling himself in the Palazzo Medici in Florence, and was now to rest awhile from his wanderings. To the cities he has lived in during the six unsettled years, and to incidents not recorded in the letters quoted above, allusions are scattered through his writings that need not here be reproduced. The little children in the cart on the campo santo at Pisa, the dispute about the damp walls in the lodgings at Pistoia, the visit to the palace of the Odeschalchi at Como, will be remembered by readers familiar with the Conversations. Suffice it only to add that Como seems to have been his favorite resting-place before he found his home in Florence, and that with the little turreted city he had associations he was always fond of recalling. There he had received the visits of Southey, of Bekker, and of the brave descendants of the Jovii; there, in talking daily with one of its residents, "the calm philosophical Sironi," he had found what seemed to him no imperfect type of the Roman of antiquity; and there, or as he had made his first journey there, he had seen the most venerable object in the most interesting spot of ancient Italy, the cypress standing on the spot where Hannibal fought his first battle with Scipio. This, he would say, was one of the two things best worth seeing in all the country, the other being the statue at the base of which Cæsar fell.

## VII. RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT: A NEW LITERARY UNDERTAKING.

Southey's project of writing a Book of Dialogues, first mentioned not many letters back and since more than once referred to, had confirmed Landor in a project of his own entertained for a longer time. It was not a new thought with him; but the circumstances in which he now took it up, and the particular form it assumed, had a result very memorable.

The bent of his genius, it is hardly necessary to say, lay in the direction of Dialogue, and the peculiarities of his temperament led him the same way. It was his first design after trial of his strength

\* I give its closing sentences. "Were I able to recur to your book, I should trespass further upon your time, which however might prove little to your advantage. I saw Mr. Southey yesterday at his own house. He has not had his usual portion of relaxation this summer, and looked, I thought, a little pale in consequence. His little boy is a stout and healthy child, and his other children have in general good health, though at present a little relaxed by the few days of extreme heat. With best wishes for your health and happiness, I remain, my dear sir, most sincerely yours, W.M. WORDSWORTH."



in *Gebir*. He had projected a series of tragic scenes in his early days of friendship with Mocatta. His *Count Julian* was a succession of dialogues in verse, as was doubtless also the tragedy sacrificed to appease its ill-fortune, *Ferrante and Giulio*.<sup>\*</sup> In his comedy of the *Charitable Dowager* he had given himself the same indulgence in prose. The very form, as of an ancient oration or address in the pnyx or agora, into which he had thrown his recent commentaries on home and foreign politics, whether written in English or Italian, expressed still that direction of his mind. At the bottom of it all was the strong sense of his own individuality which made so large a part of his character, and which he thus with the greatest advantage could bring into play. For the same form of writing most often used to conceal one's personality is also that which may be employed with the greatest success to indulge in peculiarities intensely personal without the ordinary conditions or restraints.

When a man writes a dialogue he has it all to himself, the pro and the con, the argument and the reply. Within the shortest given space of time he may indulge in every possible variety of mood. He may contradict himself every minute. In the same page without any sort of violence the most different shades of sentiment may find expression. Extravagance of statement which in other forms could not be admitted may be freely put forth. Dogmas of every description may be dealt in, audaciously propounded or passionately opposed, with a result all the livelier in proportion to the mere vehemence expended on them. In no other style of composition is a writer so free from orderly restraints upon opinion, or so absolved from self-control. Better far than any other it adapts itself to eagerness and impatience. Dispensing with preliminaries, the jump *in medias res* may at once be taken safely. That one thing should be unexpectedly laid aside, and another as capriciously taken up, is quite natural to it; the subjects being few that may not permissibly branch off into all the kindred topics connected with them, when the formalities held ordinarily necessary in the higher orders of prose composition have disappeared in the freedom of conversation.

How far such a style or method would be found suitable to the weakness as well as the strength of the character depicted in these pages, the reader has the means of judging. By many it may be thought that I have supplied such means too amply. But if the wish for whose gratification the papers here printed were given me by my old friend was to be complied with at all, I could not consent so to use them as to convey an imperfect or a false impression. Thus far, up to his forty-fifth year, through the full half of a life prolonged far beyond the allotted term, Landor stands before the reader, not perhaps completely yet not partially or unfairly depicted, and in the main by himself. He desired nothing so much as that some record having claim to be remembered of his early intercourse

<sup>\*</sup> *Ante*, pp. 183, 184. See also pp. 173, 174.

with Southey, and as far as possible of the letters they interchanged, should be made by me ; and with the materials afforded I have done my best in such a manner to comply, as, while it satisfied that wish, should do offence as little to the patience of the living as to the memory of the dead.

Upon the latter point my chief hesitation has been whether it was advisable to revive the Llanthony disputes or to tell again the story of the Bethams. But by omission of the former I should have lost some illustrations of character important in their bearing on the later passages of Landor's career ; the other narrative was necessary to explain his sudden exile from England ; and in giving effect to his own wish that both should be retained, I have been careful to take no part in the quarrels they involve. Such also would have been to him the course most pleasing ; for he was never indifferent to the truth even at the times when he failed with accuracy himself to recollect it, and he thought always he could afford to have it frankly told better than any imperfect or garbled representation of it. I remember his anger at some remarks upon him by Mr. De Quincey in which the "fiery radiations" of his spirit were enlarged upon, and he was described as a man intended by nature to be a leader in storms, a martyr, a national reformer, or an arch-rebel, but whom the accident of possessing too much wealth had turned into a solitary unsympathizing exile. Nor was his anger less at reading an anecdote of himself, I think by the same writer, wherein he was said to have sold, out of mere offence at the conduct of some of his tenants, what his ancestors had held as their patrimony for 700 years. In both statements, as in many similar ones made since his death, fact and fiction had become so oddly intermixed as only to be clearly separable by such detail as I have given.

What there is in either that has a bearing on his real character will be to any who has read these pages obvious enough ; and he would himself have been the last to object to any one who said of him, that whether better or worse than his fellows it had at least been too much his boast to be other than they. From the days of his boyhood this was his fault. At school, at home, at college, conscious always of powers that doubtless received but scant acknowledgment, he contracted such a habit of looking down upon everybody that he lost altogether the power, which the very wisest may least afford to lose, of occasionally looking down upon himself. Everything was to begin or to be altered anew for him, he was to be more sagacious than his elders, judge better than anybody what was best for himself, indulged unchecked whatever humors pleased him, and glorying that he was not cast in the mould of other men's opinions, find nothing that it became him to object to in his own, provided only they were sufficiently wild, irregular, singular, and extreme. The contradictions in such a character as this, its generous as well as its selfish points, its comic and its tragic incidents, are necessarily marked



with more prominence than in the ordinary run of men ; and almost everything will depend upon the side you approach it from.\*

Those Llanthony disputes it is impossible to review altogether with gravity, though they are a comedy with a very tragical fifth act. But until, by Betham's utter failure and break-down in his payments, the serious element comes in suddenly, we can only see, in the entire tenor of that life at Llanthony, another phase or development of a career curiously consistent in its inconsistencies. It began with the old difficulty of co-operating in the ordinary way with ordinary human beings. He doubtless had the best designs in the world when he persisted in claiming the right as a grand-juryman to act independently of his fellow-jurors in presenting for investigation alleged crimes in no way previously the subject of charge or inquiry ; but, in contesting such a claim, his fellow-jurors had common sense as well as custom on their side. Every reason, public and private, supported his demand to be placed in the commission of the peace ; but those who had to act with him in such a capacity might not unreasonably object to an impracticable colleague. No one, in short, was half the trouble to him at Llanthony that he began by being to himself. Everything that followed had this for its source. In private and in public affairs his plan of proceeding was on the same eccentric principle of differing as widely as he could from everybody else. He was never beyond the control of the mood that possessed him for the moment ; and though it was easy, by humoring this, to continue friendly with him, it was yet easier to quarrel with him by opposing it, in however slight a degree. Of course he began by exhibiting an unwise excess of kindness and concession to Betham. To Southey's friend he could not do less. He never refused him, as he says, any request however unreasonable ; he conceded them moreover in that grand style which makes the receiver seem to be conferring the favor ; and it was the man's own complaint, when the unreasonableness had arrived at the point of not paying anything he was under obligation to pay, that there was no conceivable indulgence he had not been taught to rely upon at Landor's hands. Then came discovery on both sides ; on the one that some rent must be paid or the farms given up, on the other that there was a limit to those wonderful resources of which an impression so boundless had

\* "I doubt whether among all your acquaintances," wrote Mr. Robert Landor to me, "you have ever known any two men more unlike each other than my brother as he appeared when paying his customary visits to you or Mr. Kenyon, so joyous, so benevolent then, and as he proved to be in his father's house while young, or in his own when twenty years older. Where there was no disrespect, but only a difference of opinion on some subject of no consequence whatever, I once heard him tell an old lady (my father's guest, but in my father's absence) that she was a damned fool. If you ask why such an anecdote should be related by me, I must reply that there may be still living many persons, beyond his own family, who still remember such, and would contradict any narrative of yours in which the best qualities were remembered, the worst forgotten." I had not waited for this appeal to resolve, that, if this memoir were written at all, it should contain, as far as might lie within my power, a fair statement of the truth.

been conveyed ; and, in the differences that followed, all the advantage went to the side of him who had the coolness to retain it when it fell to him. It never falls in such cases to the irritable temper and the habit of hasty language, no matter for the consciousness of right that has provoked them, or for the freedom from everything ungenerous that may accompany them.

Nor should this subject be quitted in its connection with Landor's character without the remark that, when we now look back to the most part of what we find that he intended to do, and measure it by the means that alone he possessed of doing it, absurd as in some respects the impression is, there is yet more in the retrospect to please and to excuse, at times even to excite admiration, than to offend. Few of his infirmities are without something kindly or generous about them ; and we are not long in discovering there is nothing so wildly incredible that he will not himself in perfect good faith believe. When he published his first book of poems on quitting Oxford, the profits were to be reserved for a distressed clergyman. When he published his Latin poems, the poor of Leipzig were to have the sum they realized. When his comedy was ready to be acted, a Spaniard who had sheltered him at Castro was to be made richer by it. When he competed for the prize of the Academy of Stockholm, it was to go to the poor of Sweden. If nobody got anything from any one of these enterprises, the fault at all events was not his. With his extraordinary power of forgetting disappointments, he was as prepared at each successive failure to start afresh as if each had been a triumph. I shall have to delineate this peculiarity as strongly in the last half as in the first half of his life, and it was certainly an amiable one. He was ready at all times to set aside out of his own possessions something for somebody who might please him for the time ; and when frailties of temper and tongue are noted, this other eccentricity should not be omitted. He desired eagerly the love as well as the good opinion of those whom for the time he esteemed, and no one was more affectionate while under such influences. It is not a small virtue to feel such genuine pleasure as he always did in giving and receiving pleasure, for one half cannot be selfish. His generosity, too, was bestowed chiefly on those who could make small acknowledgment in thanks and no return in kind.

The similarity in habits of mind between himself and Southey was pointed out in a previous part of this memoir, and has since had illustration from their correspondence. But it will have been seen that while both have continued to display the same peculiarity of putting in the place of reason their imagination and their passions, and of thinking thus and thus by mere force of their will or pleasure, a wide difference has been declaring itself between the tastes and desires which have thus so largely constituted opinion in each. Landor's wishes have expanded, while those of Southey have contracted, under the same influences. It was not ill said, by an acute



observer who knew them both, that their fault was not that of blindness to the truth so much as that of indifference to give it welcome unless as a discovery or possession of their own ; and that, with the possession of what they so desired, satiety ever followed quickly. Napoleon did what they talked, and they hated him. They were themselves ready enough to pull down sovereignties, but for the man who by his own might trampled on the necks of sovereigns they had nothing but contempt and dislike. With some modification this was true, up to Napoleon's fall ; but what followed put wide differences between them. Every protest against repression at home, every rising against reaction abroad, had from Landor as hearty a sympathy as it had bitter opposition from Southey. The men had not altered in temperament ; but, from altering circumstances, while self-opinion in the one had been opening itself to impressions more permanent and universal, in the other it had narrowed itself more and more to what in his position was merely accidental and personal. The distinction marks what had thus far been Landor's advantage in his exile, in his removal from sordid cares, in his freer observation of the life of the present, and in his less restricted commerce with the wisdom of the past. It shows also, as to both, that whatever might continue to be their impetuosities of opinion, there was more in Landor than in Southey of a stronger spirit of the understanding to give body and consistency to such better judgments as he might form. He was indeed preparing himself in banishment and adversity for what probably never would have come to him in happier fortune, and the result will soon be seen.

That his opinions were meanwhile separating widely from those of his friend he seems to have been anxious that Southey himself should know. "We are sailing, I think, in different directions," is his remark in the letter last quoted, making allusion to the dialogues on which both were engaged ; and Southey, replying on almost the same day to what he had said in a preceding letter\* of the line of argument taken by him against including a House of Lords in the constitution he was recommending for the Italians, gave illustration himself of their growing differences. "I have read with all the attention in my power what you say against a House of Lords. Perhaps the most difficult of all things is to establish a free government among a people altogether unused to freedom ; and if they are, as in France and Italy, a corrupt people, the difficulty becomes still greater. Where you have a representative government, two houses have at least the advantage of interposing delay in times of popular excitement ; they afford something more than an appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober. The House of Lords, since its cowardly conduct in the Queen's business, which indicated the same want of fibre that proved fatal to it in the days of the Long Parliament, has performed the service of stopping the question of Catholic emancipation after it

\* *Ante*, pp. 290, 291.

had passed the Commons. This is the most important act that it has ever performed. For the sure consequences of that emancipation would be a religious war in Ireland upon the demand for a dominant Roman Catholic establishment, which is the next step : and in England, the repeal of the Test Act ; the intrusion of the dissenters into all corporations, their predominancy in all town elections, where the election is not purely popular ; the sale of the tithes ; and so, in sure progress through the overthrow of the Church establishment, to general anarchy and spoliation." \* To say that upon every allusion here made Landor's views were as extreme in the opposite direction, would express the truth quite moderately.

Nevertheless in essential points of temperament they continued marvellously alike ; and pausing thus between the two divisions of Landor's life, in the hope of drawing from what is gone some help to the better understanding of what is to come, there is one subject on which a word may properly be said. Both friends had fallen into a habit of applying heathen doctrines and precedents in a manner alarmingly unsuitable to a Christian commonwealth ; and we see how often it has gravely recurred that they could hit upon no better remedy than the dagger of Brutus for the treacheries of Ferdinand or the tyrannies of Bonaparte. The same vehement extravagance of speech, for such only it was, both of them indulged to the end ; it was a part of the weakness of temperament, of the 'believing without reason and hating without provocation,' into which, while as to other subjects time had mollified them, special subjects always betrayed them ; yet if Landor's life had been prolonged but a few months, no man, at the murder which then astonished the civilized world and for a time reconciled all opinions, would have been more shocked than he, and no man more indignant to be told that on more than one occasion, without even the poor excuse of the excitement of civil war or of the madness arising from political defeat and ruin, he had himself seemed to give his sanction to the same crime. Nor would his indignation have been unreal. A man must be judged, at first, by what he says and does. But with him such extravagance as I have referred to was little more than the habitual indulgence (on such themes) of passionate feelings and language, indecent indeed but utterly purposeless ; the mere explosion of wrath provoked by tyranny or cruelty ; the irregularities of an overheated steam-engine too weak for its own vapor. It is very certain that no one could detest oppression more truly than Landor did in all seasons and times ; and if no one expressed that scorn, that abhorrence of tyranny and fraud, more hastily or more intemperately, all his fire and fury signified really little else than ill-temper too easily provoked. Not to justify or excuse such language, but to explain it, this consideration is urged. If not uniformly

\* Southey to Landor, 19th December, 1821. This is one of the letters printed in the *Life and Correspondence* (V. 105-107), but the whole of the passage in the text has been suppressed (with many others), and is now printed for the first time.



placable, Landor was always compassionate. He was tender-hearted rather than bloody-minded at all times, and upon only the most partial acquaintance with his writings could other opinion be formed. A completer knowledge of them would satisfy any one that he had as little real disposition to kill a king as to kill a mouse.

In fact there is not a more marked peculiarity in his genius than the union with its strength of a most uncommon gentleness, and in the personal ways of the man this was equally manifest. When, in the year following that to which this narrative has arrived, Leigh Hunt went to Italy and saw him, he endeavored to convey the impression produced by so much vehemence of nature joined to such extraordinary delicacy of imagination by likening him to a stormy mountain pine that should produce lilies. "After indulging the partialities of his friendships and enmities, and trampling on kings and ministers, he shall cool himself, like a Spartan worshipping a moon-beam, in the patient meekness of Lady Jane Grey." This is anticipating somewhat, for though imaginary conversations in manuscript lie already in his desk, none have as yet emerged from it. But from letters to his family, from papers preserved by him of this date, and from some enclosures in his letters to Southey, I have discovered that this was the precise date of some of the smaller of his poetical pieces which will illustrate the remark just made as well as almost any of his writings.

At Swansea in former years he had made the acquaintance of some ladies of Lord Aylmer's family, one of whom, regarded by him always with a very tender sentiment, went shortly afterwards to India and died suddenly while yet very young.

"Ah, what avails the sceptred race,  
 Ah, what the form divine!  
 What every virtue, every grace!  
 Rose Aylmer, all were thine.  
 Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes  
 May weep but never see,  
 A night of memories and of sighs  
 I consecrate to thee."

The deep and tender pathos of that little poem could hardly be surpassed, and in delicacy and sweetness of expression it is perfect. It was first printed in its present form some years after this date, and has since affected many readers with the same indefinable charm ascribed to it by Charles Lamb in an unpublished letter to Landor of the date of 1832. "Many things I had to say to you which there was not time for. *One* why should I forget? 'Tis for Rose Aylmer, which has a charm I cannot explain. I lived upon it for weeks."

I subjoin other brief pieces (all of them subsequently printed) from his letters during the first years of his residence in Italy. In some of them we meet again a heroine of former years, as to whom further allusion may be made hereafter; but the passion is now a playful tenderness, and sorrow or reproach has passed into very gentle pathos.

"A provident and wakeful fear  
Impels me, while I read, to say,  
When Poesy invites, forbear  
Sometimes to walk her tempting way:  
Readier is she to swell the tear  
Than its sharp tinglings to allay."

---

"No, my own love of other years!  
No, it must never be.  
Much rests with you that yet endears;  
Alas, but what with me?  
Could those bright years o'er me revolve  
So gay, o'er you so fair,  
The pearl of life we would dissolve,  
And each the cup might share.  
You show that truth can ne'er decay,  
Whatever fate befalls:  
I, that the myrtle and the bay  
Shoot fresh on ruined walls."

---

"Why, why repine, my pensive friend,  
At pleasures slipt away?  
Some the stern Fates will never lend,  
And all refuse to stay."

---

"I see the rainbow in the sky,  
The dew upon the grass;  
I see them, and I ask not why  
They glimmer or they pass."

---

"With folded arms I linger not  
To call them back; 't were vain;  
In this, or in some other spot,  
I know they 'll shine again."

---

"My hopes retire; my wishes as before  
Struggle to find their resting-place in vain:  
The ebbing sea thus beats against the shore;  
The shore repels it; it returns again."

---

"All tender thoughts that e'er possess  
The human brain or human breast  
Centre in mine for thee . . .  
Excepting one . . . and that must thou  
Contribute: come, confer it now:  
*Grateful* I fain would be."

---

"Proud word you never spoke, but you will speak  
Four not exempt from pride some future day.  
Resting on one white hand a warm wet cheek  
Over my open volume you will say,  
'This man loved *me!*' then rise and trip away."

---

"Pleasure! why thus desert the heart  
In its spring-tide?  
I could have seen her, I could part,  
And but have sighed!"

---

"O'er every youthful charm to stray,  
To gaze, to touch . . .  
Pleasure! why take so much away,  
Or give so much?"



*Poet.* Thus do you sit and break the flowers  
That might have lived a few short hours,  
And lived for you! Love, who o'erpowers  
My youth and me,  
Shows me the petals idly shed,  
Shows me my hopes as early dead,  
In vain, in vain admonished

By all I see.

*Lady.* And thus you while the noon away,  
Watching me strip my flowers of gay  
Apparel, just put on for May,

And soon laid by!

Cannot you teach me one or two  
Fine phrases? if you can, pray do,  
Since *you* are grown too wise to woo,

To listen I.

*Poet.* Lady, I come not here to teach;  
But learn, the moods of gentle speech;  
Alas! too far beyond my reach

Are happier strains.

Many frail leaves shall yet lie pulled,  
Many frail hopes in death-bed lulled,  
Or ere this outcast heart be schooled  
By all its pains."

"In Clementina's artless mien  
Lucilla asks me what I see,  
And are the roses of sixteen  
Enough for me?"

"Lucilla asks, if that be all,  
Have I not culled as sweet before:  
Ah yes, Lucilla, and their fall  
I still deplore.

"I now behold another scene,  
Where Pleasure beams with heaven's own light,  
More pure, more constant, more serene,  
And not less bright:

"Faith, on whose breast the Loves repose,  
Whose chain of flowers no force can sever,  
And Modesty, who, when she goes,  
Is gone forever."

"From you, Ianthé, little troubles pass  
Like little ripples down a sunny river;  
Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass  
Cut down and up again as blithe as ever."

"I often ask upon whose arm she leans,  
She whom I dearly love,  
And if she visit much the crowded scenes  
Where mimic passions move.  
There, mighty powers! assert your just control,  
Alarm her thoughtless breast,  
Breathe soft suspicion o'er her yielding soul.  
But never break its rest.  
O, let some faithful lover, absent long,  
To sudden bliss return:  
Then Landor's name shall tremble from her tongue,  
Her cheek through tears shall burn."

"She leads in solitude her youthful hours,  
 Her nights are restlessness, her days are pain.  
 O, when will Health and Pleasure come again,  
 Adorn her brow and strew her path with flowers,  
 And wandering wit relume the roseate bowers,  
 And turn and trifle with his festive train?  
 Grant, me, O, grant this wish, ye heavenly Powers!  
 All other hope, all other wish, restrain."

At Pistoia he saw the hair of Lucretia Borgia, on which he wrote a quatrain solemn yet fantastic in its beauty as the subject that suggested it.

"Borgia, thou once wert almost too august  
 And high for adoration; now thou 'rt dust:  
 All that remains of thee these plaits unfold,  
 Calm hair meandering in pellucid gold."

On his way to Florence these were written:—

"I leave with unreverted eye the towers  
 Of Pisa pining o'er her desert stream.  
 Pleasure (they say) yet lingers in thy bowers,  
 Florence, thou patriot's sigh, thou poet's dream!

"O, could I find thee as thou once wert known,  
 Thoughtful and lofty, liberal and free!  
 But the pure Spirit of thy wreck has flown,  
 And only Pleasure's phantom dwells with thee."

It would be difficult to surpass the delicacy and beauty of writing in all these pieces. If indeed they have here and there a fault, it will be found in something of an *over-choiceness* and conciseness of expression, at times allying itself rather to subtlety of thought than simplicity of sentiment. But for the most part, as even the few thus presented will show, they are both in feeling and style as nearly perfect as such things can be, and the most famous of the short pieces in the Greek Anthology have not a more pervading and indescribable air of refinement and grace. Southey had now to confess, jealous as he was of the time given by his friend to composition after the ancient models, that he did not write his own language worse for having become more thoroughly practised in theirs. He told Grosvenor Bedford of Landor's improvement from his years of exile, and that his wonderful genius was freeing itself rapidly from everything harsh or obscure. But he spoke of him still as a man born pre-eminently a poet; and could indeed have had small conception that he was at this moment engaged on any prose literary labor of which the sudden and wide success would go far even to dismiss from men's further remembrance his *Gebir* and his *Julian*. The letter received by Southey immediately before the allusion to the "dialogues" reached him which is printed in the last section, had enclosed what in especial I suppose to have at this time raised his hope so high for his friend's chances at last of being admitted to the highest rank among poets. This was two dramatic pieces: one taken from the story of Ines de Castro; and the other, under the title of "Ippolito di Este," a rewritten version of a couple of scenes from his burnt *Ferrante and*



*Giulio*,\* out of which one or two brief extracts will not be inappropriate here, as well to justify what Southey built upon it, as for the light it throws upon the other work its author then was busy with.

It has been said of the Imaginary Conversations that it is never possible to read them without feeling that whatever may be their truth to the circumstances and times in which their supposed speakers lived, they are still more true to Landor himself; that we always feel it is he who is speaking; and that he has merely chosen characters whom he considered suitable to develop particular phases of his own mind. There is something in this, but it is far from expressing on the particular point all that requires to be said. If the conversations had been only this, they would not have differed in result from the many similar undertakings by writers of that and the preceding century. Their distinction and their success was the combination with the intense individuality to which I have alluded at the opening of this section of some of the subtlest arts of the dramatist and of the highest poetical imagination. So calm a judgment as Julius Hare's found creations in them comparable only to Sophocles or Shakespeare : † and to so keen a criticism as Hazlitt's it appeared that the historical figures they evoked were transfused with nothing short of the very truth and spirit of history itself. ‡ Applied to some few of the conversations neither praise is in excess; and even where, as in by far the greater number, that is said from time to time which the speaker in life would not be likely to have said or to have been in the position to say, the man may thus be forgotten, but the character remains. True or false, the character conceived by Landor is in the forms of thought and speech there still. The dramatic conditions continue to be observed. Landor may be discoverable where we ought to be conscious only of Cicero, but it is in a difference between the fact as known to us and the conception formed of it, not in any falsehood to that conception or in any merely personal intrusion. If it had been otherwise, the defect would have shown itself in his poetical as in his prose conversations; and it is to exhibit the same spirit animating both that I now speak of the scenes of *Ferrante and Giulio*. They are not more perfect than those which accompanied them; but in a brief space they illustrate with surprising force Landor's management of a dialogue bringing the extremes of passion and tenderness into play.

The first scene is in a cathedral, the second in a prison; and the position of the persons introduced in a few words is this. The Duke Alfonso and his brother the cardinal have two brothers by their father's side, Ferrante and Giulio, whom they refuse to acknowledge. The duke is jealous of Ferrante's power over his subjects, and the cardinal of his influence over the girl beloved by his eminence him-

\* See *ante*, pp. 183, 184.

† *London Magazine*, IX. 523, 538, 539.

‡ *Edinburgh Review*, March, 1824.

self. The prince is a tyrant of the approved type of mediæval Italy, and the priest very exactly foreshadows Victor Hugo's famous arch-deacon. The first scene shows him in the cathedral, maddened by the rejection of his love.

"Surely no air is stirring; every step  
Tires me; the columns shake, the ceiling fleets,  
The floor beneath me slopes, the altar rises.  
Stay! here she stopt: what grace! what harmony!  
It seemed that every accent, every note  
Of all the choral music, breathed from her:  
From her celestial airiness of form  
I could have fancied purer light descended.  
Between the pillars, close and wearying,  
I watcht her as she went: I had rusht on;  
It was too late; yet when I stopt, I thought  
I stopt full soon: I cried, *Is she not there?*  
She *had* been: I had seen her shadow burst  
The sunbeam as she parted: a strange sound,  
A sound that stupefied and not aroused me,  
Filled all my senses: such was never felt  
Save when the sword-girt Angel struck the gate,  
And Paradise wailed loud and closed forever."

His passion in all its forms only repels its object. Seeing her weep after leaving Ferrante, he builds upon it a kind of hope which she at once destroys, comparing him with the brother that she loves.

"All tears are not for sorrow: many swell  
In the warm depths of gratitude and bliss;  
But precious over all are those that hang  
And tremble at the tale of generous deeds.  
These he relates when he might talk, as you do,  
Of passion: but he sees my heart, he finds  
What fragrance most refreshes it.

How high,  
O Heaven! must that man be, who loves, and who  
Would still raise others higher than himself  
To interest his beloved!

All my soul  
Is but one drop from his, and into his  
Falls, as earth's dew falls into earth again."

What follows is the dialogue in prison to which I have more especially referred, and in which is expressed what the Italian legend dryly tells us, that the cardinal obtained an order from the duke to deprive Ferrante of his eyes because the girl beloved by his eminence had praised the beauty of them. Ferrante had been imprisoned for sanctioning some popular tumult, and his brother Giulio had come to solace him, when the cardinal brother enters suddenly, and after bitter words of reproach and defiance thrusts a paper upon Giulio and goes. Ferrante, ignorant that this paper contains the sentence depriving him of sight, wonders to see Giulio, after glancing at it, rush round "the wide light chamber" in uncontrollable agony.

"*Ferrante.* O my true brother Giulio! why thus hang  
Around my neck and pour forth prayers for me?  
Where there are priests and kinsmen such as ours,  
God hears not, nor is heard. I am prepared  
For death.



*Giulio.* Ah! worse than death may come upon you,  
Unless Heaven interpose.

*Ferrante.* I know the worst,  
And bear one comfort in my breast that fire  
And steel can ne'er force from it: she I love  
Will not be his, but die as she hath lived.

Doubt you? that thus you shake the head and sigh.

*Giulio.* Far other doubt was mine: even this shall cease.

*Ferrante.* Speak of it.

*Giulio.* I must: God pardon me!

*Ferrante.*

Speak on.

*Giulio.* Have we not dwelt in friendship from our birth,  
Told the same courtier the same tale of joy,  
And pointed where life's earliest thorn had pierced  
Amid the sports of boyhood, ere the heart  
Had aught of bitter or unsound within?

*Ferrante.* We have indeed.

*Giulio.* Has my advice been ill?

*Ferrante.* Too often ill-observed, but always good.

*Giulio.* Brother, my words are not what better men  
Would speak to you; and yet my love, I think,  
Must be more warm than theirs can ever be.

*Ferrante.* Brother's, friend's, father's, when was it like yours?

*Giulio.* Which of them ever said what I shall say?

*Ferrante.* Speak; my desires are kindled, my fears quencht.

*Giulio.* Do not delay to die, lest crueller  
Than common death befall you."

The intensity of anguish in those quiet words could not be surpassed. For dramatic language and expression, in the sense formerly contrasted with stage dialogue,\* the scene is indeed a masterpiece. Ferrante cannot yet take in the horrible truth. But gradually as it dawns upon him he loses faith in all things, — in everything but her for whose love he is to suffer.

"*Giulio.* Talk not so.

Pity comes down when Hope hath flown away.

*Ferrante.* Illusion!

*Giulio.* If it were, which it is not,  
Why break with vehement words such sweet illusion?  
For were there naught above but empty air,  
Naught but the clear blue sky where birds delight,  
Soaring o'er myriad worlds of living dust  
That roll in columns round the noontide ray,  
Your heart would faint amid such solitude,  
Would shrink in such vacuity: that heart  
(Ferrante! can you hide its wants from me?)  
Rises and looks around and calls aloud  
For some kind Being, some consoling bosom,  
Whereon to place its sorrows, and to rest.

*Ferrante.* O, that was here . . . I cannot look beyond."

A gleam of hope then suddenly rises. The discontent of the people at Ferrante's imprisonment being heard in a clamor beneath the dungeon window, Giulio passionately urges his brother to show himself to his friends; but the other, knowing that failure will destroy both, invents a reason to evade the risk of sacrificing his brother. The scene closes as the lights approach by which the sentence is to be executed; and, from the brother whose life has been one act of love for him, Ferrante receives the dagger with which he stabs him-

\* See *ante*, pp. 162, 163.

self. No stage directions are wanted here. Everything is visible to us, as well of the outward form and movement of the speakers as of the soul that throbs and burns beneath.

*Giulio.* Hark! hear you not the people? to the window!  
They shout and clap their hands when first they meet you  
After short absence; what shall they do now?  
Up! seize the moment; show yourself.

*Ferrante.* Stay, Giulio!  
Draw me not thither; speak not of my wrongs;  
I would await but not arouse their vengeance,  
And would deserve but court not their applause.  
Little of good shall good men hope from them,  
Nothing shall wiser.

[*Aside*] O, were he away!  
But if I fail, he must die too, being here.

*Giulio.* Let me call out: they are below the grate;  
They would deliver you: try this one chance.  
Obdurate! would you hold me down? They're gone!

*Ferrante.* Giulio, for shame! weep not, or here I stay  
And let vile hands deform me.

*Giulio.* They shall never.

*Ferrante.* What smoke arises? are there torches under?  
Surely the crowd has passed: 't is from the stairs.

*Giulio.* Anticipate the blow.

*Ferrante.* One more must grieve!  
And will she grieve like you, too tender Giulio!  
Turn not away the head, the hand. What hold you?  
Give, give it to me. 'T is keen. They call you forth.  
Tell her . . . no, say not we shall meet again,  
For tears flow always faster at those words . . .  
May the thought come, but gently, like a dream! "

As a matter of mere literary skill this dialogue deserves careful study. Here no action requires to be written in, no stage direction to be given, no index or finger-post to be set up, for what the reader seems actually to see with his eyes even before the pain of it touches his heart. The marvel is that a man who could write in this way should have lived considerably beyond the term of middle age without having won for himself any name or reputation in a world to whose good opinion he never was indifferent, even when loudest in professing not to care for it. Some will also think it perhaps the greater marvel that he was now to succeed after failure during all those years, yet without abatement in the smallest particular of the wilfulness, the eccentricity, or the impatience which before had made success so difficult. The scene we have quoted may help us to a brief explanation.

One obvious advantage of his new undertaking was, that, avoiding further competition on a ground now seized and held in absolute possession by Byron, it was to be written in prose; but another and greater consisted in the fact, that while the dialogue form not only left him scope for humors indulged so long as to have become part of his nature, but brought under some kind of discipline both the strength and weakness that were part of his genius, the general design was at the same time such as to display in their most perfect development his choicest accomplishments as a master of style, and his most refined power as a dramatic writer. His five-act dramas



had been dialogues, but his dialogues were to be one-act dramas ; and, placed in future to a certain extent under dramatic conditions, there was to be hereafter some purpose in even the most violent of the caprices by which he had abused his strength, and in the idlest of the paradoxes on which he had wasted it. For whatever he had yet to say, he was to get appropriate utterance at last ; his mind was to find a settled place in which it might rest and expatiate ; and his life was not to be a failure altogether.

"I shall rejoice to see your Dialogues," wrote Southey to him in the letter (May, 1822) following that just quoted. "Mine are consecutive, and will have nothing of that dramatic variety of which you will make the most. My plan grew out of Boethius, though it has since been so modified that the origin would not be suspected. The personage who visits me is Sir Thomas More, as one who recognizes in me some dis-pathies, but more points of agreement. This age is as climacteric as that in which he lived ; and you see what a canvas I have taken, if I can but fill up the sketch." It is an ill canvas for dialogue which takes a road so narrow, "where but one goes abreast" ; and such was Southey's, as it had been Hurd's and Lyttelton's in similar books ; mere monologues cut up into short sentences uttered with equal appropriateness by A and B ; the main object being to recommend particular systems or lines of thought, special opinions, or social changes. Far different was Landor's. His plan had taken a range as wide as life and history. All the leading shapes of the past, the most familiar and the most august, were to be called up again. Modes of thinking the most various and events the most distant, all that had made the greatness or the littleness of mankind, were proposed for his theme. Beside the fires of the present, the ashes of the past were to be rekindled, and to shoot again into warmth and brightness. The scene was to be shifting as life, but continuous as time. Over it were to pass successions of statesmen, lawyers, and churchmen ; wits and men of letters ; party men, soldiers, and kings ; the most tender, delicate, and noble women ; figures fresh from the schools of Athens and the courts of Rome ; philosophers philosophizing and politicians discussing questions of state ; poets talking of poetry, men of the world of matters worldly, and English, Italians, or French of their respective literatures and manners.\* The very extent of such a design, if success were to be obtained at all, was a security for its fair execution. With a stage so spread before him, whether his immediate purpose were expression of opinion or representation of character, he could hardly help breaking through the "circumscription and confine" of his own small round of likings and dislikings. His plan compelled it ; and what else it exacted no man living could have supplied so well. The requisites for it were such as no other existing writer

\* If I have here used occasionally an expression to be found in a paper in the *Edinburgh Review* on Landor's collected works, this may perhaps be forgiven, as I wrote that paper.

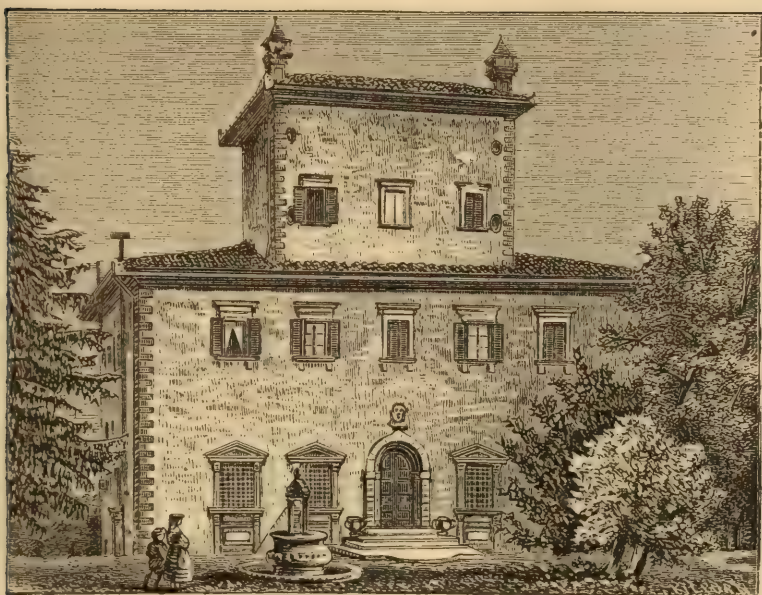
possessed in the same degree as he did. Nothing had ever been indifferent to him that affected humanity ; poetry and history had delivered up to him their treasures ; and the secrets of antiquity were his.

The first beginnings of his enterprise were mentioned to Southey in a letter from Florence of the date of the 9th of March, 1822. "It is long ago," he writes, "since you first told me that you were writing some dialogues. I began to do the same thing after you, having formerly written two or three about the time when the first income-tax was imposed. I have now written fifteen new ones, throwing into the fire one between Swift and Sir William Temple, and another between Addison and Lord Somers ; the former because it was democratical, the latter because it was composed maliciously, and contained all the inelegances and inaccuracies of style I could collect from Addison. The number would surpass belief. The two earlier ones, the first between Lord Grenville and Burke, the other between Henry the Fourth and Sir Arnold Savage, were written more than twenty years ago, which no person would believe of the former ; but I gave the substance of it to Robert Adair to get inserted in the *Morning Chronicle*, and a part of it (now omitted) was thought too personal, and it was refused. I hope your dialogues are printed, that they may give some credit and fashion to this manner of composition."

Thus employed, we leave him at the close of the first half of his life happier upon the whole than he has been since its outset in the Tenby and Swansea days, with a better outlet than has yet been open for his powers and faculties, and with even a little gleam of sunshine, from his mother's care and sacrifices, again lighting up his personal fortune. In the letter to Southey just quoted he tells him of his hope to be able, some day soon, to fix himself permanently, not in Florence itself, but in a villa in its neighborhood ; and he says that he shall add a garden to it by converting a vineyard into one, which "I cannot do unless I purchase it ; and (a thing I never expected) this too is in my power." Another thing as unlooked for he was soon also to find within his power. He never expected, that, if any considerable number of people were found to praise or admire him, he should be able to entertain other than a mean opinion of himself ; and of this excuse for every eccentricity, this foolish principle which has dominated over so much of his past life, he will very shortly be deprived. He will discover that when people praise him they do not necessarily lower him to their level ; that they do not prove him to be, for that reason, only so much more like themselves ; and that it is not therefore essentially a base or unworthy thing to desire or to deserve, nay even in some small degree to obtain, popularity. We may not be sanguine indeed that this wiser experience will be permanent, or that old errors and extravagances will not still be abundant ; but the promise is fairer than it has been, and from the last half of Landor's life there is at least the prospect of better results than have attended the years that are gone.



BOOKS V.-VIII.



LANDOR'S VILLA AT FIESOLE.

1821-1864.





## BOOK FIFTH.

1822-1828. ÆT. 47-53.

### THE IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.

I. Friends in Italy and England. — II. The Manuscript on its Way. — III. A Publisher found. — IV. What the First Volume contained. — V. What the Second Volume contained. — VI. How the Book was received. — VII. The Southey Correspondence. — VIII. Family Letters. — IX. New Series of Conversations. — X. Contents of the New Series.

#### I. FRIENDS IN ITALY AND ENGLAND.

“JULIUS HARE will have the kindness to put this letter into the post-office when he reaches London. I have long expected to see Mr. Kenyon in hopes of reading your new poem, of which I have heard not indeed many but very high eulogies.” These are the opening lines of the first letter written to Southey by Landor, early in 1822, after Florence had become his settled abode; and in the whole of his later life there are not two pleasanter figures than the friends it names.

It was not however Julius, but Augustus Hare, to whom the letter was intrusted, as appears from a later passage in it correcting the mistake; for it was not till towards the close of the year that Julius was returning to his law studies in the Temple, after that visit to his brothers Francis and Marcus at Milan in the preceding winter when he first made acquaintance with the name and writings of Landor, to whom all the brothers Hare, as we shall see, became ultimately known, Augustus and Marcus, as well as Francis and Julius; but the latter two most familiarly. Hare-brained, Southey called them all; and there was sufficient truth in the playful imputation to recommend them especially to this new friend, to whom the impetuosity and eagerness as well as various information of Francis, and the scholarly acquirements and speculative turn of Julius, might have seemed but the reflection of a part of his own larger and more various nature. “The Hares,” he wrote to his sisters in 1833, “are beyond all comparison the most pleasant family of *men* I ever was acquainted with.”

His knowledge of them began with Francis, with whom he became intimate soon after establishing himself in the palazzo Medici in Florence; from whose society, he often said, he derived the animation and excitement that had helped him most in the composition

of his imaginary conversations ; and with whom his friendly relations continued to the close of Hare's life at Palermo.\* Not indeed without occasional interruption from that excess or over-vehemence of speech from which neither was free, and which their common friend, Lord Blessington, seems to attribute more especially to Hare, in writing of his marriage in 1827 that il Signor Francesco had been so much improved by it that he at last allowed other people to talk. There is even a hint of the failing in Landor's tender allusion to the friend,

“ . . . Who *held mute* the joyous and the wise  
With wit and eloquence, whose tomb, afar  
From all his friends and all his countrymen,  
Saddens the light Palermo.”

And by nearly the last remaining of the English residents of those days in Florence, where his own name will always be remembered with love and honor, it has been lately mentioned to me. “I used,” says Mr. Seymour Kirkup, “to see him and his friend Francis Hare together ; and it was a constant struggle of competition and display between them ; both often wrong, although men of strong memory. They used to have great disputes, mostly on questions of history. Hare avoided the classics and Landor the sciences, above all the ‘exact,’ and all relating to numbers, except dates, where, owing to his prodigious memory, he had generally the advantage when the other gave him the chance. Hare was often astounded at being corrected. He was thought infallible ; and I remember our consul-general at Rome calling him a monster of learning.” But only the pleasantest side of all this was remembered when, on going to England with his wife in 1827, Francis had asked for an introduction to Southey, and Landor described him as among the kindest and most intimate friends he ever had, to say nothing of his learning, his wit, and the inexhaustible spirit and variety of his conversation. “I owe him as much pleasure as I can give him, and none will be a greater than what these few lines will procure him.”

To Wordsworth, the real bearer of the letter of 1822 had become known some years earlier ; and there is interesting mention of both Augustus and Julius in a letter of Wordsworth's to Landor early in 1824, where he says he has a strong desire to become acquainted with the Mr. Hare whom his friend had mentioned, and who, to the honor of Cambridge, was in the highest repute there for his sound and extensive learning. This was Julius, who corresponded with Landor most intimately many years before he personally knew him. “I am happy to say,” continues Wordsworth, “that the Master of Trinity College, my brother, was the occasion of his being restored to the

\* I will quote, as honorable to both, one of Hare's last letters from Palermo: “My dear Landor, — It did not require this fresh proof of your friendship to convince me that you were one of the most disinterested, one of the most zealous and constant of friends. That I have long known. *Qualis ab incepto.*” Landor had been making some exertion for Hare's children.



Muses from the Temple ; and to Mr. Julius's brother Augustus \* I am under great obligation for having volunteered the tuition of my elder son, who is at New College, Oxford, and who, though he is not a youth of quick parts, promises from his assiduity and passionate love of classical literature to become an excellent scholar. By the by, he seems very proud of your Idyls and the accompanying Essay, as an honor to modern times."

The expectation of seeing that other friend who has been named, Mr. John Kenyon, had to wait several more years for fulfilment ; and for so long it was a loss to Landor of the joyousest and pleasantest of all his associates. "Probably Mr. Kenyon has resigned all idea of coming into Italy," he wrote to Southey, a few weeks after Augustus Hare left ; "for it was only a few days ago that I received a letter from Wordsworth which he had put into some French post-office ; it bore the usual postmark of Chambery." This was the letter I have already quoted as partly written by Mrs. Wordsworth because of her husband's failing sight ; and it had greatly alarmed Landor. "I replied directly, telling him what I had formerly done, and with great success, — in about a fortnight. Sea-bathing and early hours were my remedies. I am convinced that those who read much and think little do not suffer ; and that thinking has a greater share in the malady than reading, though perhaps neither would alone produce it." Southey is adjured at the end of the letter to tell what he is doing in the way of poetry. Spring being always his own idle season, he is himself doing nothing. He has not courage even to ripple the current of his thoughts with a pencil as he walks.

Southey's reply was more about Wordsworth's than his own poetry ; and in everything he wrote at this time about that greater master, whose slow but steady advance was all but overshadowing such small enjoyment of poetical fame as Byron's supremacy had left to himself, there is a generous, manly spirit. He has honest pleasure in bringing Landor to Wordsworth's side. His letters are filled with praise of the poet of Rydal Mount. His merits, he rejoices to think, are getting wider acknowledgment every day, in spite of the duncery that cannot understand him, in spite of the personal malignity that assails him, and in spite of the injudicious imitators who are his worst enemies. "He is composing at this time a series of sonnets upon the religious history of this country ; and marvellously fine they are. At the same time, not knowing his intention and he not being aware of mine, I have been treating the same subject in prose, so that my volume will serve as a commentary upon his. Mine will go to press almost immediately ; and I hope to send you both, with the first volume of the *Peninsular War*, early in the spring."

Not many weeks later, a letter from Wordsworth himself an-

\* "Augustus Hare," writes Southey to Landor in May, 1822, "showed me yesterday what you had written of Wordsworth in a letter to his brother. It is a great pleasure to me when I meet with a person who knows your writings, and can talk with me about them and about you."

nounced two books as on their way to Florence : “ *Ecclesiastical Sketches*, or a sort of a Poem in the Sonnet stanza or measure ; and *Memoirs of a Tour on the Continent in 1820*. This tour brought me to Como ; a place that, with the scenery of its lake, had existed in my most lively recollection for upwards of thirty years. What an addition it would have been to my pleasure if I had found you there ! Time did not allow me to get farther into Italy than Milan, where I was much pleased ; with the cathedral especially ; as you will collect, if ever you see these poems, from one of them entitled the Eclipse of the Sun.”

The letter went on to announce but small improvement in the infirmity which made its writer so dependent on others, abridged his enjoyments so much by cutting him off from the power of reading, and involved such large losses of time. What was local in the disorder had indeed been aggravated lately by ill-regulated application, and by what was described as a weakness caused by feelings stronger than the writer’s frame could bear. But he had, in one of his intervals of better sight, been reading Landor’s Latin poems again, and he speaks in detail of some, especially the *Polyxena*,\* as full of spirit and animation. Still he feels that he ought to tell his friend that he is himself no judge of Latin poetry, except upon general principles. He never himself practised Latin verse, not having been educated at one of the public schools. His acquaintance with Virgil, Horace, Lucretius, and Catullus was intimate ; but as he never read them with a critical view to composition, great faults in language might be committed that would escape his notice. Any opinion of his on points of classical nicety therefore would be of no value, should he be so inconsiderate as to offer it.

Wordsworth appears nevertheless to have received real pleasure from the Latin poems, though, like Southey, he was impatient of time given to them which he thought might be better given to English poetry. “ Still I must express the wish that you would gratify us by writing in English. In all that you have written in your native tongue there are stirring and noble things, and that is enough for me. In a tract of yours which I saw some years ago at Mr. Southey’s, I was struck by a piece on the War of the Titans,† and I was pleased

\* See *ante*. p. 267 ; also, pp. 241 and 280.

† This allusion is to Chrysaor (republished in *Hellenics*, pp. 105-111), a poem of which the treatment as well as subject is Titanic. Southey equally admired it; singling out the impious address to Jove, “ Whom nations kneel to, not whom nations know ”; and the giant rebel’s angry horror at his overthrow : —

“ . . . The Sacrilege  
Raised up his head astounded, and accurst  
The stars, the destinies, the gods . . .  
But answer heard he none. The men of might  
Who gathered round him formerly, the men  
Whom, frozen at a frown, a smile revived,  
Were far: enormous mountains interposed,  
Nor ever had the veil-hung pine outspread  
O’er Tethys then her wandering leafless shade.”

That last image of the sail has a wonderful beauty in it.



to find also rather an out-of-the-way image in which the present hour is compared to the shade on the dial.\* It is a singular coincidence that in the year 1793, when I first became an author, I illustrated the same sentiment precisely in the same manner." A comment of still more striking interest follows upon a passage in another book of Landor's, his *Simonidea*,† seen also on Southey's table.

Landor's observation was to the effect that the sonnet was a structure of verse incompatible with the excursive genius of our commanding language. "You commend," says Wordsworth upon this, "the fine conclusion of Russell's sonnet upon Philoctetes,‡ and depreciate that form of composition. I do not wonder at this. I used to think it egregiously absurd, though the greatest poets since the revival of literature have written in it. Many years ago my sister happened to read to me the sonnets of Milton, which I could myself at that time repeat; but somehow or other I was then singularly struck with the style of harmony, and the gravity and republican austerity of those compositions. In the course of the same afternoon I produced three sonnets, and soon after many others; and since that time, and from want of resolution to take up anything of length, I have filled up many a moment in writing sonnets which, if I had never fallen into the practice, might easily have been better employed."

In the same letter Wordsworth cleared up the mystery of the missing Mr. Kenyon. He had left Rydal Mount in the previous September with the intention of proceeding directly to Italy, but had

\* I have quoted the piece, *ante*, p. 109.

† The *Simonidea*, a half-crown pamphlet of 98 pages (*ante*, p. 154) printed at Bath in February, 1806, was so called because its opening short pieces were dedicated to the memory of the dead, a species of composition in which Simonides excelled. Among them, for example, were a portion of the lines to Rose Aylmer's memory, which I did not believe to have been printed so early (this exquisite poem I have given in a more perfect state from his later letters, *ante*, p. 305); those on Mrs. Lambe (p. 121) and others to Nancy Jones, the Iöne of his youth (p. 120). The sonnet referred to by Wordsworth is characterized in the preface as "a poem on Philoctetes by a Mr. Russell, which would authorize him to join the shades of Sophocles and Euripides." By what slight touches delightful effects can be missed, or be produced, will be shown by mention of Charles Lamb's favorite little poem as published in this volume. The charm of the repetition of the words "Rose Aylmer" at close of the first and opening of the second stanza has no existence here, "For, Aylmer, all were thine," being the original text, "Sweet Aylmer" immediately following; and the fulness of meaning which is given to the "night of memories and of sighs" exhibits no trace in the tautology of the "night of sorrows and of sighs" as printed in the original. The (anticipated) profits of the volume were of course given away, with a remark in the preface too characteristic to be lost. "I bear no disrespect towards men who write for emolument, although I never did; even when I was rather extravagant and very poor. For I always found enough anxiety attending composition, without the voluntary penance of supporting at the end of my exertions an outstretched expectation of gain. If anything of profit should arise from these trifles, the printer will give it to the hospital. This I think proper to mention, that the prudes of both sexes, who may discover or imagine certain sins in them, may also consider that something has been done for atonement and absolution." His last allusion anticipates the attack on some of the Latin verses which Byron subsequently made, and which the writer of *Don Juan* might hardly have been expected to make if Landor had not been Southey's friend. The volume ended with six pages of hexameters "Ad Robertum Fratrem," in which a certain critic who had made the brothers the subject of remark was mercilessly assailed.

‡ See *ante*, p. 117.

changed his purpose and taken a wife instead ; forgetting to send on to its destination the letter that was to introduce him to Landor. He was again talking of starting for the Continent with his wife, but only for the summer, so that this promised visitor would probably not reach Florence. But there were other visitors his friend would hear of soon. "It is reported here that Byron, Shelley, Moore, and Leigh Hunt (I do not know if you have heard of all these names) are to lay their heads together in some town of Italy for the purpose of conducting a journal to be directed against everything in religion, in morals, and probably in government and literature, which our forefathers have been accustomed to reverence. The notion seems very extravagant, but perhaps the more likely to be realized on that account." Could he only see what was now the popular literature of London ! His sojourn in Italy had at least removed him from the presence of the trash which issued hourly from the press in England, and tended to make disgusting the very name of writing and books. Wordsworth was himself so situated as to see little of it, but he could not stop his ears, and he sometimes envied Landor the distance that separated him altogether from the intrusion.

News of Southey was not forgotten. He had left Rydal Mount after a visit of two or three days, just before Landor's last letter reached it. He was well, and making continued progress in many works, — his *History of the Peninsular War* ; a Book on the Church of England ; two Poems ; "with regular communications in the *Quarterly Review* into the bargain." Had Landor heard of the attack of Byron upon him, and his answer ? His lordship had lost as much by that affair as Southey had gained, whose letter was circulated in almost every newspaper in England. Southey's son, too, continued to thrive, promising well ; and the rest of his family were flourishing. "I am glad," Wordsworth adds, "that you also are a father, and I wish for a peep at your boys, with yourself to complete the trio."

But beside his boys there was another production of Landor's of which his fellow-poet had lately heard, and wished also to peep at, perhaps more eagerly. Not only had Southey told him of the Manuscript Conversations shortly before, but that it was Landor's intention to offer to himself the dedication of them when printed ; and thus ran the closing words of his present letter : "I expect your book with impatience. I shall at all times be glad to hear from you, and shall be proud to receive any public testimony of your esteem."

Almost at the same moment Landor was writing to Southey of such of the Conversations as he had completed : "I have waited several weeks, hoping to find an opportunity of sending them to Longman. If anything should prevent him from undertaking the publication, the terms of which I leave at his discretion, I would offer them to Mawman, to whose house I once went in company with Parr." The old swift impatience ! Before he has even sent them to one publisher he is thinking of another, and multiplying all the pos-



sible sources from which disappointment or vexation could arise to him. With what results we shall see.

## II. THE MANUSCRIPT ON ITS WAY.

Writing on the 3d of June to Southey, Landor tells him that, some little time before, Wordsworth had written, giving better account of him than of himself, and that his friend Dr. Richards had arrived since then, "and we conversed a good deal together about both of you. On his asking me what I had written of late or was occupied in writing, I could only say that I had sent a manuscript to London, which ought to have arrived on the eighteenth of April, by Captain Vyner of the Life Guards, but that Longman, to whom it was addressed, had given me no account of it."

This MS. was the first portion of the *Imaginary Conversations*. But a post-letter between Florence and London took then from eleven to fourteen days, and if the captain had dropped his precious freight in Paternoster Row at the instant of arrival, Landor could not by the promptest conceivable despatch have learnt this any earlier than the first week in May. Yet some days before even that date he had swiftly and decisively informed the Longmans by post in what way four copies of *the book* might be sent to him. Four copies of the printed book while yet the types to be used in composing it were without form or place! It was the old impetuous way; but though it probably surprised Paternoster Row a little, no sign was made from that respectable quarter. There was absolute silence up to the time when this letter of the 3d of June described the torments that the silence had occasioned.

"I left entirely to Longman the conditions on which he might publish my book, and I wrote again a full month ago to him informing him how he might forward to me four copies. He has taken no notice whatever either of my manuscript or my letters. Will you do me the kindness to request him to send the former to Mawman, who I believe will undertake it, leaving it at his discretion. This disappointment has brought back my old bilious complaint, together with the sad reflection on that fatality which has followed me through life, of doing everything in vain. I have however had the resolution to tear in pieces all my sketches and projects, and to forswear all future undertakings. I try to sleep away my time, and pass two thirds of the twenty-four hours in bed. I may speak of myself as of a dead man. I will say, then, that these *Conversations* contained as forcible writing as exists on earth. They perhaps may come out after my decease, and the bookseller will enrich some friend of his by attributing them to him, and himself by employing him, as the accredited author of them, on any other subjects. If they are not really lost, or set aside for this purpose, I may yet have the satisfaction of reading them here at Florence, and perhaps they may procure me some slight portion of respect."

Such perverted ingenuity of self-torment even Rousseau might have envied, nor has the wonderful *Confessions* a more curious page. Beginning and ending not unhopefully, hope has entirely vanished in the interval. He thinks his venture wrecked; accepts the ill-luck as part of a fatality that attends him; and throws up everything. All the projects he had formed he abandons, and all the sketches connected with his lost achievement he destroys. He takes to his bed, and will sleep away the rest of his time. As in future therefore he can only regard himself in the light of a dead man, he thinks he may say how good the perished *Conversations* were; and with this arises suddenly another not unnatural thought, that perhaps they were too good to be lost. What if they have fallen among thieves instead, and the thieves are only waiting the chance of their author's death to make out of them a harvest of money as well as fame? A fancy he finds so aggravating that he turns suddenly the other side of the picture, puts off his intention of dying, and hopes he may yet have the satisfaction, not merely of reading his printed book in Florence, but of getting out of it a little fame for himself.

Nor has this better mood subsided on the 21st of the same month, the date of his next letter to Southey, when, though he is still without certain tidings of the manuscript, and not without misgivings, he is far from despair. He is at work to recover a copy, but believes the original may yet turn up in London, and mentions a circumstance extenuatory if not exculpatory of the Longmans. "In the few lines I wrote to you the other day I expressed the grief I had experienced, I know not whether from Longman entirely, or from Captain Vyner of the Guards to whom my parcel was intrusted by a Mr. Olivieri of Florence. I afterwards wrote to Longman requesting he would inform me whether he had received the parcel; but he returned no answer. These fellows are ignorant and indifferent how much suffering they may occasion. I shall request a friend of mine to demand the manuscript; and shall try some other means of having it printed next year. I have passed the last eighteen days and nights in trying to recover all parts of it. I am afraid I have lost several, as a great deal was written on scraps of paper. I have lost my patience at all events, and the remainder of my health by it. I am afraid no exertion will enable me to complete this most toilsome of all labors before my friend Dr. Richards leaves Tuscany."

The mystery was not cleared up till nearly three months later, when, writing to Southey on the 16th of September, Landor tells him that the manuscript which he had so bitterly bewailed for not arriving in the Row by the 18th of April, had not actually arrived there till the 19th of August, and that the reproaches he had heaped on the Longmans for unanswered letters were at least equally divisible between them and himself. Longman, in a letter I received last week, informs me that the parcel containing my MS. reached him only on the 19th of August; and that, in both mine, I had



only requested him to inform me when it arrived. If so, both he and I were equally stupid; I for not being more explicit, he for not being aware that its delay was far more important than the hour of its arrival. Meantime after much agitation I had intrusted Mr. Hare, brother of Augustus Hare whom you have seen, with the care of delivering it to Mawman for printing. Hare is very anxious to be presented to you. He is a most acute and well-read man. I told him I would mention him to you, which I have done in my other letter. Among my scraps and projects I had filled a couple of sheets (I think) with a conversation between you and Porson. In my bitter vexation at the miscarriage of my MS. I threw away whatever I could lay my hands on. Some days ago I found an old letter with part of it, in which were some remarks on Wordsworth's poetry. I enlarged on these, and there is now a dialogue between you and him on this subject."

A point of some delicacy is afterwards touched upon. He had offered the dedication of his book to Wordsworth, and the offer, as we have seen, had been accepted with pride. But it was not to be. "I had intended to inscribe the dialogues to Wordsworth, knowing that he has felt pain from his unprincipled adversaries, and wishing to remove it by the expression of opposite opinions from a man whose judgment in these matters he would value more than theirs. The language of Porson indeed is not without its sharpness. I have made him escape from you rather than yield; though I have extorted from him a compliment to you, such as I think I could have extorted even if he were alive. I have however written with such asperity and contemptuousness of the people in power, that a sense of delicacy would not permit me to place Wordsworth's name before the volume." And now comes his reason for having handled so sharply the people in power. "Why have these rascals suffered me to be insulted by their agents?—me, who never asked them for anything, and who was silent when I thought them wrong in their measures? Out of four thousand English here I was selected for slight and contempt! the only man in all the four thousand who ever acted with disinterestedness for the public good, or who will be remembered a year after his death. Under no other system could this have happened. It could not have happened in Russia or in Turkey. In those countries men who are superior to others in virtue and intelligence are promoted and rewarded. I wanted neither. I did not even claim respect. I would only have avoided disrespect, disdain, and insult. So long as such wretches are in power and employment, I am the avowed and unmitigable enemy of those who countenance them, and of the government that allows it. My peace and health have suffered; and, what is worse, my compositions. These bitter waters soak through their most solid parts, and there is hardly a plant that does not taste of them. It appears to me that there will be about thirteen sheets in duodecimo. If Mawman begins to print on the 5th

of October (he will receive the MS. on the 1st), they will be finished by the end of the month; and I have ordered a copy to be sent to you, with one for Wordsworth, at Longman's. There are now twenty-three Conversations."

Recovering breath from this philippic, which was but the expression given by his wild irascibility to a commonplace dispute with some members of the British Legation in Florence, who will read the lines added about Mawman without laughter mingling with pain? Nothing literally is known to the writer but that the MS. will be taken to that publisher; yet upon this frailest of foundations is built at once not only its acceptance, but a series of operations on the part of all to be concerned in producing it, of such unequalled vigor as will insure a printed book in five-and-twenty days. Thus with headlong eagerness was Landor ever raising up inexhaustible provision for disappointment and trouble. Sisyphus was nothing to a self-torturer who might at any time of his own accord have taken his hand from the stone.

### III. A PUBLISHER FOUND.

Mawman declined the book as Longman had declined it. It was next taken to a publisher named Martin, and by him also refused. Then it was taken to Valpy, who proposed terms that could not be acceded to. In these negotiations nearly six months passed; and it was March, 1823, when Landor again wrote to Southey, soon after he had instructed Julius Hare to carry the manuscript for another chance to Ridgway. Busied in all the interval with additions and improvements, interested more than at first in the variety of subjects he has opened, adding and inventing daily from unsuspected riches of resource, and with every fresh demand upon his power finding its energy and productiveness unfailing, Landor was by this time so satisfied with his progress, so confident in the value of his amendments, and so occupied in the task of transmitting them to Hare, that he had happily not over-tormented himself with the succession of unsympathizing publishers who have churlishly refused his book, and was even ready himself to pay for a printer if no one else would do it. But he was in some trouble as to Wordsworth.

"So long is it since I have heard from you that it appears as if we lived, conversed, and corresponded in some happier and past state of existence. Wordsworth, I hope, is not offended that I have changed my intention of dedicating my projected work to him. While it contained for the greater part subjects unconnected with politics, I could do it without the fear of injuring him; but as I have now doubled, and more than doubled, the quantity of matter, and as the political opinions of many characters introduced are widely different from those in fashion, I feared lest any one should attempt to wrong him by presuming that he favored the opinions by accepting the dedication. Introducing a conversation on his works between you and Porson, I could praise him with more delicacy and more discretion. Among my new conversations are Bacon and Hooker, Marcus Cicero and



his brother Quinctus; and to you I need not express the difficulty of my task. The dialogue between the latter two takes place on the eve of Cicero's death, at his Formian villa. Mr. Hare tells me you have assisted him in his attempts to obtain me a printer. I desire no profits, if any should arise from the publication; and I would take upon myself half the loss, provided that only three hundred and fifty copies were printed in octavo. There will be about twenty-two sheets. It appears to me that all important questions should be fairly and fully discussed. I invite criticism and defy power. It will vex me if I am at last obliged to employ a printer who publishes only pamphlets for the mob, conscious as I am that in two thousand years there have not been five volumes of prose equal in their contents to this. By volumes I mean the entire works of one author. I have wearied my excellent friend Mr. Hare to death with perpetual corrections and insertions. He never even saw me. He does not complain of his trouble, occupied as he is in other literary labors; but reproves my attacks on Catholicism, to which he appears more than moderately inclined. There is no religion or party to which he would not be an ornament and a support. I have not yet received your books, — these alone can lessen the anxiety I feel about mine. It is not improbable that I forgot to tell you I had another son born five months ago. I gave him my names, Walter Savage. He is strong and quiet, and disposed to be as lively and laughing as the others. This is all we want for the present, and the foundation of all we shall want for the future."

Another month was hardly gone when the publisher was found at last. Landor's suggestion of the "printer who publishes only pamphlets for the mob" having ended like the rest by Mr. Ridgway's politely declining, Julius Hare was left to his own judgment. He had now quitted the Temple for a classical tutorship in Cambridge, upon the joint persuasion of Whewell and Wordsworth's brother, then Master of Trinity; but, having contributed to the *London Magazine* in his Temple days, he had a favorable knowledge of its proprietor, John Taylor, and to him he made application. "I considered him," he says, "the most honorable man in the trade; and after no small difficulties, arising however altogether from conscientious scruples and in no degree from considerations of profit, we came to an agreement; or I ought rather to say, I was so weary of soliciting publisher after publisher, and so anxious to put the work into the hands of a respectable man, that I forced Taylor to undertake it." Landor's instruction as to terms had been that the publisher was to receive all the profits, and he would himself engage, provided the impression were limited to 500 copies, to make up any loss at the end of one or two years. Making sure however of a larger sale than this, Hare proposed, as a compromise between Landor's offer and the usual half-profits plan, that both the loss and the gain should be shared. And it was so settled.

But the difficulties were not over. The printing had hardly begun when Taylor's "conscientious scruples" broke out strongly at some passages which he held to be objectionable. He required a too plain-spoken word put in Cromwell's mouth to be removed, and Hare, having heard from Southey that Landor would certainly not give way on

the point,\* resisted. Upon this Taylor said its retention would make the difference between his printing a thousand copies or two hundred and fifty less; and Hare replying that he had no alternative, the word held its place and the impression was limited to seven hundred and fifty.

More serious discussion then arose upon a passage in the conversation between Middleton and Magliabechi, the result of which was a reference by Hare to Southey to ask if either he or Wordsworth would consent to look over the proofs, Taylor undertaking to be bound by the decision if either of them approved what he condemned. Whereupon Southey wrote this to Landor (8th May, 1823); and after declaring his belief that Taylor was a man very superior to most of his trade, and that he had demurred really on grounds of principle, said he had himself at once replied that he would most willingly (Wordsworth having gone to the Netherlands) take upon himself the responsibility suggested, and act for his friend in the matter as his friend would by him, taking care that wherever there was an omission the place should be marked. He added that the specimen Landor had sent him of the dialogue of the Ciceros was delightful, and that Julius Hare spoke of the whole just in such terms as he should expect it to deserve.

On the 31st of the same month Landor replied. He felt so much pleasure on receiving Southey's letter, he said, that it hardly could be increased by reading it, although the information it gave him satisfied all his wishes.

"The first thing I did was to write instantly to Taylor, and I hope he will receive what I have written in despite of a defective address, for I directed the sheets, containing a few lines to him and additional matter for the Conversations and some notes, 'Messrs. Taylor, printers, London,' not knowing more. Omit whatever you think ought to be omitted. Before I knew anything of Taylor's proposal to you, I had hoped to obviate his objection by the following lines: 'The author not only has authorized, but has requested the editor to mark with his reprobation whatever in these Conversations may be injurious to the national establishments, or irritating to the public feeling. The characters he introduces must speak characteristically and strongly, often with prejudices and sometimes with perverseness. His editor then marks this sentence as liable to do mischief, if general principles are drawn from it unwarily, and if it is not considered as the fancy of the individual who utters it, rather than as a theory laid down for establishment by the writer.' Taylor will not expect that Demosthenes (as I tell him) should talk like Canning. The language of the ancients is suitable to them, and can do no more harm than their works, which I presume he would not hesitate to print if a new edition were called for. Enough on this. . . . What in the name of Heaven can Wordsworth do in the Nether-

\* I quote from Landor's letter to Southey of the 19th March, 1822: "There is one sentence which will perhaps shock the fastidiousness of some English readers. Cromwell says, speaking of the sectaries, &c., &c. No other mode of expression would be so characteristic. I would, however, be sparing of these flowers from the Deanery garden, and present no other of them." The word appeared in both first and second editions, but in the collected edition of 1846 it was expunged by himself."



lands? Italy and Greece are the only countries which I would pay a postilion eighteenpence to see. Men in other countries are less interesting than beavers; whole generations of them are not worth so many barrels of dry figs. If I were still at Como, I would however go as far as into the Netherlands to see Wordsworth; odious as travelling is to me, and never accomplished without a fever of some days."

Landor's characteristic proposal, it is needless to say, would only have given greater force to Taylor's objections by giving greater prominence to the questionable passages. Southey preferred to act on the powers of omission also here given him, and some few sentences were condemned accordingly. But as to the passage in the *Middleton*, in which that not very orthodox divine was represented as disputing the efficacy and even the propriety of prayer, Southey was unable to see the force of Taylor's objection, and the point had again to be referred to Florence. "According to the last note I received from Hare," wrote Landor to Southey on the 2d July,

"Taylor objects to some passages in the dialogue of *Middleton*. It appears to me that I have acted fairly. I have given the known sentiments of both parties. The fabricators of religions for state purposes found the pure and simple doctrines of Jesus Christ unfit for them. He says: 'When you pray, you shall pray thus.' For he was the least violent of all innovators. What-ever leads to truth should be left upon the road: to stop and interrogate is right enough; but not to thrust it aside, break it, or efface it. Hare kindly says he would let it pass, from a love of free discussion. I shall be delighted if your sentiments are the same, and shall be contented if they are not. I have been so often wrong, that I doubt of myself perpetually. In regard to prayer, if ever I prayed at all, I would not transgress or exceed the order of Jesus Christ. In my opinion all Christianity (as priests call their inventions) is to be rejected excepting His own commands. There is quite enough in these for any man to perform; which he will be best induced to do by reading his life and reflecting on his sufferings. His immediate followers were, for the greater part, as hot-headed fanatics as Whitfield and Wesley, and probably no less ambitious. These, however, are truths I would not propagate; for it is false that all truth is *always* good. Suppose, for instance, that a man should be told that his wife or daughter had been guilty of a certain fault seven years ago. It might be true; but it would create much misery, and might precipitate them again from the purity to which they had returned. To increase the sum of happiness, and to diminish the sum of misery, is the only right aim both of reason and of religion. All superstition tends to remove something from morality, and to substitute something in its place; and is therefore no less a wrong to sound probity than to sound sense."

But though Hare would have let the thing pass, and Southey thought it admissible, Taylor stuck to his objection. It is not easy to reconcile this with his own offer to be bound by Southey's decision; but, incompatible as such a view appears with any suggestion of a compromise, Hare thought that Taylor had never barred his right of electing to decline the whole matter. "I had agreed," he said afterwards, "to print what Southey sanctioned; but of course

this was only binding to a certain extent, and could not oblige Taylor to print what he thought morally wrong, and hurtful to Christianity. He may have been mistaken: I thought he was. I thought the argument against prayer, as an argument, good for nothing. I may have been equally mistaken; but at all events I cannot blame Taylor for acting conscientiously according to his judgment." It should be added that Taylor repeatedly desired Hare to find another publisher, and recommended him one (Mr. Simpkin) who would feel no such scruples as he had himself; but Hare disliked the thought of changing. Taylor had shown so much interest in the book, and had taken such pains to have it handsomely and correctly printed, that Hare was more anxious than ever to continue with him; and, rather than break, even ventured at last to make the alterations in the Middleton. This was hardly judicious. It got rid of a difficulty for the time; but Landor had a ground of complaint on discovering it, and some excuse afterwards (a thing that did not often happen to him) for quarrelling with a very worthy man.

It was during the Middleton discussions and delays that Hare gave Taylor permission to print in the *London Magazine* the dialogue between Southey and Porson containing the comment on Wordsworth's poetry. This was done to please Wordsworth, Landor willingly consenting; and in the July number of 1823 it appeared. It excited considerable interest; and much curiosity was raised for the appearance of the book, which the same magazine had promised would be immediate; but for several more months the promise was not kept, and Wordsworth meanwhile wrote to Landor.

Sharp as were some of Porson's sayings, the poet had reason to be proud of the tone and matter of the dialogue; and it was of no common import, at this turning-hour of his fame, that a champion of such appearance and prowess should declare upon his side. Southey speaks of him as in those latter times the glory of their country; and when reminded that a rabble had persecuted him, and a Jeffrey made him his prey, retorts with a couple of allegories, that an elephant was born to be consumed by ants in the midst of his unapproachable solitudes, and that in the creation God had left his noblest creature at the mercy of a serpent. Even Porson's severity is so tempered as not to exclude the highest claims. He condemns the habit of pursuing thoughts too far, of showing them entirely rather than advantageously, of accumulating instead of selecting them, in language that the poet might in earlier days have read with inexpressible advantage; and his bitterest censure of the line about the "witness" and "second birth," that then disfigured the stanza of Laodamia descriptive of the Elysian Fields,\* hardly detracted from its accompanying magnificent eulogy that the poem was one which Sophocles might have exulted to own, and that the former part of the

\* Removed afterwards in consequence of Landor's criticism.



stanza might have been heard with shouts of rapture in the regions it describes.

Wordsworth's letter was dated the 21st of January, 1824, and began by telling Landor he was both tired and ashamed of waiting any longer. Many months had he looked for his dialogues, "and they never appear." The expectation of the book had prevented his answering Landor's former letter, in which were mentioned some unpleasant topics relating to the writer's own feelings; but as a second letter had since arrived not adverting to them, he hoped the storm was blown over. Wordsworth then went on to say, that having been at Keswick in the summer, Southey had read to him part of the dialogue in which he is introduced as a speaker with Porson ("it had appeared, something I must say to my regret, in a magazine"), and he has since read the remainder himself. "You have condescended to minute criticism upon the *Laodamia*. I concur with you in the first stanza,\* and had several times attempted to alter it upon your grounds. I cannot however accede to your objection to 'the second birth' in the later stanza merely because the expression has been degraded by conventiclers. I certainly meant nothing more by it than the *eadem cura* and the *largior æther*, &c., of Virgil's sixth *Æneid*. All religions owe their origin or acceptation to the wish of the human heart to supply in another state of existence the deficiencies of this, and to carry still nearer to perfection what we admire in our present condition; so that there must be many modes of expression, arising out of this coincidence or rather identity of feeling, common to all mythologies; and under this observation I should shelter the phrase from your censure. But I may be wrong in the particular case, though certainly not in the general principle."

By this reasoning Wordsworth is further led to a remark of Landor's in the letter last received from him, — that he was disgusted with all books that treat of religion. He was afraid it was a bad sign in himself, Wordsworth says, that he had little relish for any other. Even in poetry it was the imagination only — namely, that which is conversant with or turns upon infinity — that powerfully affected him. "Perhaps I ought to explain. I mean to say that, unless in those passages where things are lost in each other, and limits vanish, and aspirations are raised, I read with something too much like indifference." But all great poets were in this view powerful religionists; and therefore, among many literary pleasures lost to Wordsworth, he had not yet to lament over that of verse as departed. But politics! What did Landor say to Bonaparte on the one side and the Holy Alliance on the other? to the prostrate Tories? and to the contumelious and vacillating Whigs, who disliked or de-

\* Porson also objected to the second and fourth line of the first stanza as terminating too much alike, and to "have I required" and "have I desired" as worse than prosaic. It is curious, however, that Wordsworth has left unaltered the lines thus objected to, though he says he agrees in the objection; while, in deference to a criticism which he states himself unable to accede to, he has altered altogether the subsequent passage.

spised the Church, and seemed to care for the State only as far as they were striving, without hope, as he honestly believed, to get the management of it? As to the low-bred and headstrong Radicals, they were not worth a thought. He had himself, indeed, small interest of any kind in the matter at present. His politics used always to impel him more or less to look out for co-operation with a view to embody them in action; but feeling himself utterly deprived of this interest, the subject, as matter of reflection, languished accordingly. Cool heads no doubt there were in the country, but moderation naturally kept out of sight; and, wanting associates, Wordsworth declared himself to be less of an Englishman than he once was or could wish to be. At the close of his letter he wishes very much to have Landor's opinion of Dante. "It has become lately, owing a good deal I believe to the example of Schlegel, the fashion to extol him above measure. I have not read him for many years. His style I used to think admirable for conciseness and vigor without abruptness; but I own that his fictions often struck me as offensively grotesque and fantastic, and I felt the poem tedious from various causes. . . . Farewell. Be so kind as write soon, and believe me ever sincerely and affectionately yours, Wm. Wordsworth." What Landor replied does not appear; but his opinion of Dante was given publicly some years later in very memorable fashion.

A month after Wordsworth's letter, on the last day of February, 1824, Southey announced to Landor the completion of the printing of the *Imaginary Conversations*. "Your dialogues have been delayed some three weeks by an involuntary fault of mine in not sending to Julius Hare a passage from that between Cicero and his brother. It is not worth explaining how this happened, and how the wrong passage was forwarded to me in London. It is remedied now. The first thing I did on my return home from a long absence was to transmit the insertion. The last sheet has probably by this time been struck off; and you may perhaps receive news of its publication as early as this will reach you."\* And now I will venture myself to interpose some account, in a little detail, of what the book really was which thus was ready to be given to the world. It contained thirty-six conversations, eighteen in each volume; and these I will attempt so to describe as to show in each case the drift or design, something of the varieties of style, as well as what is possible of the illustrations of character, and pre-eminently of Landor's own character, that surprisingly abound in them.

#### IV. WHAT THE FIRST VOLUME CONTAINED.

The opening subject was taken from our early history. The first Richard, returning from his imprisonment, is met by the Abbot of

\* Omitted, with other passages, in the letter as printed (*Life*, III. 115), which is also otherwise incorrect.



Boxley, and to his old confessor relates the story of his wanderings and his captivity. The moral of it is contempt for the princes of Europe, and respect for Saladin. Creatures, he had discovered *them* to be, "of less import than the sea-mews on their cliffs; men praying to be heard and fearing to be understood; ambitious of another's power in the midst of penitence; avaricious of another's wealth under vows of poverty; and jealous of another's glory in the service of their God." Was *that* Christianity, and was Saladin to be damned if he despised it? In him he had seen wisdom, courage, courtesy, fidelity, and the power to judge a hero's nature by his own. "To them he sent pearls and precious stones, to me figs and dates; and I resolved from that moment to contend with him and to love him." Excellent character is in that. But the story told by the Lion-heart has also another lesson. As Richard sailed along the realms of his family, little else had been visible to him than sterile eminences and extensive shoals; and in the wide ocean, when these were fled behind him, he found himself little of a monarch. Old men guided him, boys instructed him; and when thus he had acquired the names of his towns and harbors, and been shown the extent of his dominions, one cloud, that dissolved in an hour, covered them. Not so the capacity and courage of the men by whom they had been governed. "What nation hath ever witnessed such a succession of brave kings two hundred years together as have reigned uninterruptedly in England? Example formed them, danger nurtured them, difficulty instructed them, peace and war in an equal degree were the supporters of their throne." Thus, on the first page of a work which, as he said to Francis Hare, it was his pride so to have planned as to be under no restraint from claim of citizenship or country to withhold what might be due to men of every race and clime, Landor impressed unmistakably that other pride which he never could suppress, of having been born himself an Englishman.

For interlocutors in his second dialogue he had chosen bearers of names also very dear to his countrymen, Sir Philip Sidney and his friend Lord Brooke; the subject of whose talk, among the wilds and glades of Penshurst, is of the art of contentment and a happy life, and its principal object to show that, however wisely or unwisely we may look upon contentment as the cause of happiness, we shall find still that since we are contented because we are happy, and not happy because we are contented, the happiness to be desired must be that only which will satisfy what is noblest in ourselves. "We are all desirous of pushing forward into every stage of life excepting that alone which ought reasonably to allure us most, as opening to us the *via sacra* along which we move in triumph to our eternal country. We labor to get through the moments of our life as we would to get through a crowd. Such is our impatience, such our hatred of procrastination, in everything but the amendment of our practices and the adornment of our nature, one would imagine we were dragging

Time along by force, and not he us." Not a few of the most subtle chords of its theme, old as the world itself, are touched in this dialogue; and drawn alike from the knowledge of his books and his life, Sidney's character found in it very perfect expression. With much delicacy this was marked in what he is made to say of the love and practice of poetry and its independence of other than its own rewards; which could hardly have been written by a man ignorant of the *Apology* and the *Arcadia*, though these are not reproduced even in the turn of a phrase. Never indeed, throughout all the series, was there anything in the dialogues borrowed or merely imitative. Not to insert in any one of them "a single sentence written by, or recorded of, the personages who are supposed to hold them," had been the pride of Landor's design; he adhered to it inflexibly; it helped him to truth of character where least careful as to truth of circumstance; and, when he makes Sidney talk of the difficulty of writing as the ancients have written without borrowing a thought or an expression from them, we see the personal reference. But with what Brooke says of the spot amid Penshurst woods in which he had found his friend, I must quit the dialogue, of which Julius Hare said well that it was calm and serene as a summer evening. Among its many wise and noble things there may be finer than this, but there is none that more clings to the memory. "What a pleasant spot, Sidney, have you chosen here for meditation! A solitude is the audience-chamber of God."

Another English subject he took for his third dialogue from the supposed talk of Henry the Fourth with Sir Arnold Savage, the first recorded Speaker of the House of Commons; and here were strokes of character that are excellent, as well as touches that exhibit in a lifelike way the place and the significance in history of both the sovereign and subject who are talking before us. Henry, bent upon completing the conquest of France, makes rough recital of what his Commons will have to provide him with; is warned by Savage of things he will require far more than any he has enumerated; and, to much eager questioning of what these can be, is reminded of the hearts of his subjects. "Your horse will not gallop far without them, though you empty into his manger all the garners of Surrey. . . . The whole people is a good king's household, quiet and orderly when well treated. . . . Act in such guise, most glorious Henry, that the king may say *my* people and the people may say *our* king, and I then will promise you the enjoyment of a blessing to which the conquest of France in comparison is as a broken flag-staff."

Matters critical, such as may have interested literary men at the close of Porson's life, and incidental notices of the poetry of Wordsworth, were the subject of the dialogue of Southey and Porson already named, the fourth of the series. Landor here delivered himself sharply, through the mouth of Porson, against canons of criticism at that time in vogue; laughed at Mr. Matthias and his admirers; and quit-



ted himself of an old grudge against his own reviewers in younger days, those "daring geniuses, ensigns and undergraduates, members of Anacreontic and Pindaric clubs," to whom his *Phocæans* had been Greek and his *Gebir* foolishness. There is a capital stroke against Gifford, introduced as the little man that followed Southey in the *Critical Review*, whose pretensions widened every smile his imbecility excited, of whom Porson is made to say that he would certainly, if Homer were living, pat him in a fatherly way upon the cheek, and tell him that "by moderating his fire and contracting his prolixity, he might give the public before long something really worth reading." In Porson's mouth also is placed a reply to the charge of inequality in the poetry of the ancients (with whom he classes Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton), saying that it is the property of modern poetry, as it is of modern arms and equipments, to be more uniformly trim and polished, but that the ancients had more strength and splendor if they had also more inequality and rudeness. Very much in character, too, is his plan for the recovery of the missing Greek manuscripts; his belief that the well-directed labor of twenty good scholars might in a few years retrieve what has been lost by the bigotry of popes and caliphs, and that with a smaller sum than is annually expended on the appointment of some silly young envoy might be recovered some trace of nearly all the writers whose disappearance has been the regret of genius for four centuries. "To neglect what is recoverable is like rowing away from a crew that is making its escape from shipwreck." Nor is the old scholar out of place as devil's advocate against Wordsworth, putting his objections with humor and force, and drawing out Southey's defence of his friend. In the detail and niceties of criticism Landor is never so strong as in its generals and principles, but the subject here was handled without unfairness on either side, and with so much of character on both as to mark their differences even in points of agreement. Where the mistakes of critics are the theme, Southey extenuates while he blames; "clear writers, like clear fountains, do not seem as deep as they are: the turbid look the most profound": but Porson has no consideration for such adversaries; "they know not whether they are upon the body of a giant, or upon one of ordinary size, and bite both indiscriminately." Replying to a friend's remark upon this dialogue, Southey conceded that Porson and himself might not have conversed as Landor had exhibited them; "but we could neither of us have talked better," he added, and most people will agree with him.

In the fifth dialogue the speakers were Oliver Cromwell and that Michael (misnamed by him Walter) Noble, the friend of Oliver and member for Lichfield in the Long Parliament, some of whose blood ran in Landor's own veins; his grandfather, Robert Landor of Rugeley, having (in 1732) married the sole daughter and heiress of Noble's grandson Walter, of Chorley Hall, Longdon, through whom Landor's father inherited a good estate. The drift of this dialogue is to show

Cromwell stubbornly putting aside the intercessions of his friends the republicans for the life of Charles ; and there is capital character in the half-humorous, half-evasive way, in which the deeply set tragic purpose of the Puritan general declares itself. "Why, dost thou verily think me so, Walter?" he says, when his friend has called him cruel. "Perhaps thou art right in the main ; but He alone who fashioned me in my mother's womb, and who sees things deeper than we do, knows that." Profound touches of this kind contrast well with the stately periods in which the associate of Vane and Harrington has been pleading for mercy. "We should be slow in the censure of princes, and slower in the chastisement. Kingship is a profession which has produced few among the most illustrious, many among the most despicable, of the human race. As in our days they are educated and treated, he is deserving of no slight commendation who rises in moral worth to the level of his lowest subject ; so manifold and so great are the impediments. . . . Let us consider that, educated in the same manner and placed in the same position, we ourselves might have acted as reprovably. Abolish that forever which must else forever generate abuses ; and attribute the faults of the man to the office, not the faults of the office to the man." This conversation was very nearly the only one that pleased the *Quarterly* reviewer, who had probably failed to discover what was really meant by it.

The sixth dialogue — first of a series famous for its range of subject, its variety of treatment, and a familiarity with classic life and thought unparalleled since the revival of letters — brought upon the scene the sages and orators of antiquity. *Æschines* and *Phocion* are the speakers ; their twofold theme being *Demosthenes*, and the character and laws of the Athenians. Defects in both are sharply criticised ; in the former by *Æschines*, in the latter by *Phocion*, whose defence of the great adversary of Philip becomes a lesson in eloquence and government to his rival. The style of the conversation may be judged of by the way in which *Phocion* checks the impatience of *Æschines* under the thought of the evil enemies and times that have befallen them, reminding them that no one from without can inflict worse upon a man than he is always inflicting on himself, and that the remedy for both is the same. "The gods have not granted us, *Æschines*, the choice of being born when we would ; that of dying when we would, they have. Thank them for it, as one among the most excellent of their gifts ; and remain or go, as utility or dignity may require. Whatever can happen to a wise and virtuous man from his worst enemy, whatever is most dreaded by the inconsiderate and irresolute, has happened to him frequently from himself ; and not only without his inconvenience, but without his observation. We are prisoners as often as we bolt our doors, exiles as often as we walk to *Munychia*, and dead as often as we sleep. It would be a folly and a shame to argue that these things are voluntary, and that what our enemy imposes are not. . . . In fine, *Æschines*, I shall



then call the times bad when they make me so." From the point of view of ancient life that is true philosophy, nor is it with the proper reserves and limitations inapplicable wholly to modern thoughts and ways.

The seventh dialogue, with Elizabeth and Burleigh for its speakers, was quite a little masterpiece of humor and character. Here Edmund Spenser's laureateship and pension are talked about; and the queen's pleasant pedantic patronage of the Muses, condescending to those sacred damsels as but another sort of maids-of-honor, shows off by whimsical contrast her minister's complaint that ladies of such doubtful character should so have "choused" her highness. "God's blood!" she swears at his contemptuous laugh over a poet's complaint of neglect, "shall the lady that tieth my garter and shuffles the smock over my head, or the lord that steadieth my chair's back while I eat, or the other that looketh to my buckhounds lest they be mangy, be holden by me in higher esteem and estate than he who hath placed me among the bravest of past times, and will as safely and surely set me down among the loveliest in the future?" It is in vain that Cecil reiterates the pension and the butt of canary. "The moneys are given to such men," his mistress rejoins, "that they may not incline nor be obligated to any vile or lowly occupation; and the canary that they may entertain such promising Wits as court their company and converse; and that in such manner there may be alway in our land a succession of these heirs unto Fame." This may be thought too favorable a view of her highness's regard to letters, but it is true to her character all the same; for the trick of her speech is not better caught in it than her inbred loyalty of nature, to which indeed it does greater justice than she ever cared to mete out to herself. "A page of poesy is a little matter; be it so: but of a truth I do tell thee, Cecil, it shall master full many a bold heart that the Spaniard cannot trouble." One such heart betrays itself, while Cecil reads at his mistress's command some lines that Edmund has written on the cruelty of the Goddess of Chastity; and there is another little copy of verses by him, read to her by Burleigh, which she thinks of inferior merit, not being written with his wonted fancifulness nor in learned and majestical language, but of which the homely and rustic way moves her the more as demonstrating that since her laureate had resided in Ireland his genius had been dampened by his adversities. Yet not as "a fee grief due to a single breast" is the sorrow expressed in them. We have all a part in the poet's lament, as he tells how much is lost,

"When, rising from the turf where youth reposed,  
We find but deserts in the far-sought shore;  
When the huge book of Faery-land lies closed,  
And those strong brazen clasps will yield no more."

Even Burleigh, when his reading was done, may have winced a little under his mistress's closing words:—

"Thou mightest toss and tumble in thy bed many nights, and never eke out the substance of a stanza: but Edmund, if perchance I should call upon him for his counsel, would give me as wholesome and prudent as any of you. We should indemnify such men for the injustice we do unto them in not calling them about us, and for the mortification they must suffer at seeing their inferiors set before them. Edmund is grave and gentle; he complains of Fortune, not of Elizabeth, of courts, not of Cecil. I am resolved, so help me God, he shall have no further cause for his repining. Go, convey unto him those twelve silver spoons, with the apostles on them, gloriously gilded; and deliver into his hand these twelve large golden pieces, sufficing for the yearly maintenance of another horse and groom. Beside which, set open before him with due reverence this Bible, wherein he may read the mercies of God toward those who waited in patience for his blessing; and this pair of crimson silk hose, which thou knowest I have worn only thirteen months, taking heed that the heelpiece be put into good and sufficient restoration, at my sole charges, by the Italian woman nigh the pollard elm at Charing Cross."

Hardly less admirable was the picture of Elizabeth's successor in the eighth dialogue, where the speakers were James the First and Isaac Casaubon, and the principal subject popery. James's oddities of speech had not been so felicitously caught as Elizabeth's vernacular, but his native mother-wit, pedantic folly, shrewd cunning, real learning, dogmatic absurdities, argumentative subtleties, and a hatred of Jesuit and presbyter as devouring as his love for himself, were reproduced with humor and success. And it was very well said of this class of the dialogues, I think by Hazlitt, that the verisimilitude arises less from the studied use of peculiar phrases or the exaggeration of peculiar opinions, than from the fact that the writer is so well versed in the productions and characters of those he brings upon the stage that the adaptation takes place unconsciously and without apparent effort. Southey, then fresh from his *Book of the Church*, was unprepared for such handling by his friend of the weapons of theological controversy; and he found all that portion of the dialogue denouncing the popes, exposing the horrid vices and monstrous beliefs of Rome, and slaying again the thrice-slain Bellarmine, masterly in the extreme. James's discipline even for his bishops was not too much for him.\* "If any one of mine in his pruriency should cast his wild eye askance, and ruffle his mane and neigh and snort to overleap his boundary, I would thrust the Bible into his mouth forthwith, and thereby curb his extravagance. For, M. Isaac, we do possess this advantage: our bishops acknowledge in spirituals the sole authority of that sacred book: whereas your papist, when you push him, slinks off from it as he lists, now to one doctor, now to another, now to saint, now to father, now to confessor; and, as these retire from him and will have nothing to say to him or for him, he has recourse to tradition, which is anywhere or nowhere." But

\* Southey was an accurate reader; and upon becoming acquainted with Casaubon's letters, which Landor had sent him, wrote out to say that the view they had led the latter to take of the character of James the First very much accorded with the opinion he had himself expressed concerning him. (August, 1824.)



Southey's appetite was only for the high-spiced condiments of James : it had no stomach for the stronger meats to which his majesty is invited by Casaubon. "I would authorize no inabilities or privations for a difference in mere articles of faith : for instance, it would be a tyranny or madness to declare a man incapable of beating the enemy because he believes in transubstantiation ; but I would exclude from all power, all trust, all office, whoever should assert that any man has legitimate power of any kind within this realm, unless it repose in, or originate from, the king or Parliament, or both united." The proper correction to James's humorously unconscious contradictions in claiming for himself what he tramples on the pope for exercising, is excellently supplied throughout by this liberal wisdom of Casaubon.

The ninth dialogue was the first in which Landor appeared in his own person, talking with the Marchese Pallavicini, whose palace he rented at Albaro, and to whose boast of the magnificence of Genoese doorways he makes reply that there are oaken staircases in England as worthy to commemorate, and that he had himself inherited an old ruinous house (at Ipsley) up whose staircase the tenant rode his horse to stable him. The talk throughout is much upon architecture, passing by easy transition from men's houses and gardens to the national or individual peculiarities indicated by them ; and dogmatizing after the usual fashion of talkers upon art, who seldom fail to find themselves more knowing about it than those whose lives have been devoted to its practice, and whose labors are their theme. But when Landor turns to matters more remote, he satisfies the expectation raised. One passage I will quote, for the comment it then provoked, and the confirmation it has since received. He is speaking of Rome, and says that Lucullus was the first of the nation who had any idea of amplitude in architecture.

"Julius Cæsar, to whom glory in all her forms and attributes was more familiar than his own Penates, meditated the grandest works of utility and decoration, in the city and out : but he fell a victim to insatiable ambition, and left nothing memorable in his birthplace but Pompey's statue. Augustus did somewhat in adorning the city ; but Augustus was no Pericles. Tiberius, melancholy at the loss of a young and beautiful wife borne away from him by policy, sank into that dreadful malady which blighted every branch of the Claudian family, and, instead of embellishing the city with edifices and sculpture, darkened it with disquietudes and suspicions, and retired into a solitude which his enemies have peopled with monsters. Such atrocious lust, incredible even in madness itself, was incompatible with the memory of his loss and with the tenderness of his grief : nor were his mental powers always estranged. Nero, in the beginning of his government, and indeed five entire years, a virtuous and beneficent prince, was soon affected by the same insanity, but acting differently on his heart and intellect. He never lost sight of magnificence, and erected a palace before which even the splendors of Pericles fade away."

Much gravity of objection was made to this\* by the earliest crit-

\* It appeared originally as a note to the dialogue of *Pericles and Sophocles*.

ics of the *Conversations*, and Hazlitt condemned it as the wildest of paradoxes that Tiberius should be put forth for a man of sentiment retired to Capri out of grief for his wife, and Nero promoted into a humane and highly popular person. Yet since that date there are scholars both in Germany and England who have discovered something of truth in both paradoxes; and a learned professor at this very hour is busily engaged in demonstrating, in one of the reviews, that Tiberius was a brilliant soldier, and a not unjust or cruel sovereign, and that the turning-point of his life, the cloud which darkened his spirit in youth and never quitted him in age, was the divorce from Vipsania and compelled marriage with Julia, which Landor made the subject of a later and very masterly dialogue. The present one has a characteristic close. The speakers look over at the lofty and grand flight of steps, leading up to a palace just before them, on which Landor's children are playing. "These are my vases, marchese," he cries out: "these are my images, these are decorations for architecture, this is ornamental gardening, and suitable to all countries and climates." Whereupon Pallavicini says that over those steps he had seen the wife of a patriotic Italian to whom the palace belonged, the Marchese Cambiagi, dragged and insulted by Austrian soldiers, and that, seeing also the English general looking on, it had occurred to him that our houses of Parliament should have animadverted on such an outrage, and our general should have been made to answer for it. To which Landor rejoins: "These two fingers have more power, marchese, than those two houses. A pen! he shall live for it. What, with their animadversions, can they do like this?"

A smile arises here; but it is very certain that in the next following dialogue, the tenth, the "two fingers" leave a scathing mark which the "two houses," by any given number of speeches or resolutions, would have found it hard to remove. "I have been told that among Landor's *Conversations*," writes Julius Hare in the *Guesses at Truth*, "the most general favorite is that between General Kleber and some French officers. If it be so, one may easily see why. Beautiful as some touches in it are, it is not so far removed as most of its companions from what other men have written and can write." It is in truth a story, even a love-story, the dialogue being set in narrative; but all that is suffered or said in it expresses only with more extraordinary force the cruel character of Bonaparte's glory, and its hardening effect on Frenchmen. During the invasion of Egypt a young English officer sitting at the base of the great pyramid, and about to surrender himself to the French, is deliberately slain by a French rifle; and what is found upon him, as they plunder his body, tells the affecting little tale. Among his papers is a poem on the battle of Aboukir, from which one stanza on the desolation of "the land of all marvels in all ages past" may be taken here.

"O'er cities shadowing some dread name divine  
Palace and fane return the hyena's cry,  
And hoofless camels in long single line  
Stalk slow, with foreheads level to the sky."



The eleventh dialogue introduced Bishop Burnet and Humphrey Harcastle, and in execution was one of the happiest of the series. The bishop's style is excellently caught : credulous, gossiping, coarse, but with character in every word, amusingly graphic and distinct. The Southey and Byron controversy had been raging just before, and both combatants had tossed about the name of Landor, Byron rhyming it with gander in one of the later cantos of *Don Juan* ; when Landor himself by this dialogue took part in the quarrel, delivering his heaviest blows from the mouth of the garrulous bishop. Burnet answers Harcastle's questions after his uncle Sir Humphrey by rambling off with a delightful humor into all about Sir Hum's flight and escape at the Restoration, his drinking, verse-writing, love-making, and his outwitting Mr. Cowley both in politics and poetry, though the king had chosen Abraham to circumvent Hum ; and by relating how people used to declare that Hum might have overtopped Abraham altogether if he could have drunk rather less, thought rather more, and felt rather rightlier, for that he had great spunk and spirit, and not a fan was left upon a lap when any one sang his airs. However, the bishop protests that to sit as arbitrator between two fighting poets and between two fighting game-cocks he should consider equally foolish, only that both were not equally wicked, — being firmly of opinion that those things which are the most immoral must always be the most foolish. But in truth, he adds, his unfitness to arbitrate may perhaps be because he does n't very well know what poetry is ; for who would ever have thought that my Lord Rochester's reputed child, Mr. George Nelly, was for several seasons a great poet ?

"Yet I remember the time when he was so famous a one that he ran after Mr. Milton up Snow Hill, as the old gentleman was leaning on his daughter's arm from the Poultry, and, treading down the heel of his shoe, called him a rogue and liar, while another poet sprang out from a grocer's shop clapping his hands, and crying, 'Bravely done! by Beelzebub, the young cock spurs the blind buzzard gallantly!' On some neighbor representing to Mr. George the respectable character of Mr. Milton, and the probability that at some future time he might be considered as among our geniuses, and such as would reflect a certain portion of credit on his ward, and asking him withal why he appeared to him a rogue and a liar, he replied, 'I have proofs known to few : I possess a sort of drama by him, entitled *Comus*, which was composed for the entertainment of Lord Pembroke, who held an appointment under the king, and this John hath since changed sides, and written in defence of the Commonwealth.'"

This reference to the Wat Tyler raid was not to be mistaken ; but what followed on the after-career of Mr. George struck harder still.

"Afterward, whenever he wrote a bad poem, he supported his sinking fame by some signal act of profligacy ; an elegy by a seduction, a heroic by an adultery, a tragedy by a divorce. On the remark of a learned man that irregularity is no indication of genius, he began to lose ground rapidly,

when on a sudden he cried out at the Haymarket, *There is no God*. It was then surmised more generally and more gravely that there was something in him, and he stood upon his legs almost to the last. Say what you will, once whispered a friend of mine, there are things in him strong as poison, and original as sin."

One would give one's little finger to have said that, exclaimed Julius Hare; Cribb himself never put in such a blow. Towards the close, too, another such hits home, where the bishop hopes for Mr. George, now no longer among the living, that the mercies which had been begun with man's forgetfulness would be crowned with God's forgiveness. To which a compliment from Mr. Hardcastle on the worth that even writers of perishable fame may assume when represented by such a pen as the bishop's (a light one becoming as a film in agate, and a noxious one as a toad in marble), draws from Burnet a remark on the fallacy of human judgments which closes with noble appropriateness this fine conversation.

"How near together, Mr. Hardcastle, are things which appear to us the most remote and opposite! how near is death to life, and vanity to glory! How deceived are we, if our expressions are any proofs of it, in what we might deem the very matters most subject to our senses! the haze above our heads we call the heavens, and the thinnest of the air the firmament."

Of the sequel something will be told hereafter, in one of the letters to Southey. Hardly had the dialogue been printed when Byron's gallant exertions for the Greeks, followed by his death, turned Landor's anger into sorrow, and he was eager to make what amends he could. But, "alas, my writings are not upon slate: no finger, not of Time himself, who dips it in the clouds of years and in the storm and tempest, can efface the written." Leaving it therefore, he placed beneath it in his second edition a generous tribute to the better parts of a character of which, in the conversation, he had depicted only the worst.

The speakers in the twelfth dialogue were the famous Austrian grand-duke Peter Leopold and the French president Du Paty whom he has summoned to confer upon the new code he is preparing for Tuscany, and with whom he discusses the laws of various nations, such defects in them as call for amendment, and such social or national peculiarities as they have risen from, or by sympathy become part of. England is not spared any more than France or Italy; but in the latter it is shown that bad laws had grown out of what was worst in the surrounding social and religious influences, while in the former they have sprung up in the teeth of what is best in both society and religion. "Wherever," says Du Paty of the Italian, "there is a substitute for morality, where ceremonies stand in the place of duties, where the confession of a fault before a priest is more meritorious than never to have committed it, where virtues and duties are vicarious, where crimes can be expiated after death for money, where by breaking a wafer you open the gates of Heaven,—probity and



honor, if they exist at all, exist in the temperament of the individual." Nor is he more merciful to his countrymen. "We French are the most delicate people in the world on points of honor, and the least delicate on points of justice." In other words, puts in Leopold, the most on imaginary things, the least on real. "A man's vanity tells him what is honor, a man's conscience what is justice : the one is busy and importunate in all times and places ; the other but touches the sleeve when men are alone, and, if they do not mind it, leaves them. *Point of honor* you may well call it ; for such precisely is the space it occupies." As to the English, however, prince and president are in less perfect agreement : and there is an amusing comparison of the grand-duke's between the manners of English ladies abroad, "taking alarm or umbrage at every foot that approaches them," and the more winning ways of his Florentines ; which calls forth by way of rejoinder from the president a picture, not it may be hoped too flattering, of the well-born Englishwoman at home. not only superintending the village school, hearing the children their lesson, examining their cleanliness, observing their dress, inquiring into their health, remarking their conduct, presaging their propensities, amused at their games, and interested in their adventures, but also visiting the sick, conversing with the aged, comforting the afflicted, and carrying her sons and daughters with her to acquire the practice of their duties. "If," he adds, after admission that even such women, travelling too often, leave these qualities behind them, "we desire to know with certainty what religion is best, let us examine in what country are the best fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, wives : we shall there also find the best citizens, and of course the best Christians." Here the speakers are again in agreement ; and, in what is said by both of the degrading influences upon morals and laws of confession, celibacy, purgatory, and all the noxious brood of saints, miracles, intercessory prayers, prohibitions, and indulgences that are the stock-in-trade of Rome, we have the results of long and masterly observation of actual life in Italy. Allowance will be made here and there for statements verging on the extreme. Du Paty has even a theory that Cervantes, by his immortal romance, meant to laugh something more than knight-errantry away ; and Leopold, resolved upon curtailing in his dominions the holidays of the Church, declares his belief that every saint in the calendar had made (not counting monks) ten thousand beggars and ten thousand thieves.

It should be added that a hint for more effectually dealing with both beggars and thieves was thrown out in this dialogue, written while yet poor-laws and prisons were unreformed, and reformatories hardly known ; and throughout it ran a keen criticism of defects of English laws only partly remedied since ; their illusory, dilatory, and costly procedures ; their punishments for bringing a man into contempt, "as if any one could be brought into it without stirring a step on his own legs toward it" ; and all the wrongs inseparable from their

excessive use of halters and of fines. How the uses of a language, too, may exhibit differences or distinctions of character, is another truth shown in it by many examples from the Italian; and with a few of these that also illustrate the unfavorable impression thus far made upon the writer by the peculiarities of the people he had cast his lot among, I quit the dialogue.

"Of all pursuits and occupations, for I am unwilling to call it knowledge, the most trifling is denominated *virtù*. An alteration in a picture is *pentimento*. The Romans, detained from war and activity by a calm, termed it *malacia*; the Italians, whom it keeps out of danger, call it *bonaccia*. Three or four acres of land with a laborer's cottage are called a *podere*. Beggarly magnificence of expression! Every house with a barn door instead of a narrower is *palazzo*. I saw open in a bookseller's window a boy's dictionary, *Dictionarium Ciceronianum*, in the page where *heros* was, and found its interpretation *barone, signore*. Strength which frightens, and finery which attracts them, are *honesty*: hence *valentuomo* and *galantuomo*. A well-dressed man is a man of honor, *uomo di garbo*. *Spogliare* is to undress; the spoils of a modern Italian being his shirt and stockings."

These are given by Du Paty. But Leopold contributes one from his own profession.

"*Governare* means to govern and to wash the dishes. This indeed is not so absurd at bottom; for there is generally as much dirty work in the one as in the other."

All, however, are not unfavorable; and our last may be an example of a pleasanter kind.

"We may discern, I think, the characters of nations in their different modes of salutation. We Italians reply, *Sto bene*: the ancient Romans, *valeo*: the Englishman, I am *well*: the Frenchman, *I carry myself well*. Here the Italian, the best formed of Europeans, stands with gracefulness and firmness, in short, *stands well*: the Roman, proudly confident in his strength, says, *I am stout and hearty*: the Englishman feels throughout mind and body this 'standing well,' this calm confident vigor, and says, *I am well*: the Frenchman *carries himself so*."

In the thirteenth conversation Demosthenes and Eubulides appeared on the scene, the orator defending himself to his old teacher of Miletus against adversaries alike of his politics and eloquence, and in his turn carrying war into the territory of his assailants. The main object seems to be that Demosthenes should relate the discipline and experiences by which the varieties of his method, his alleged irregularities of speech, and the character of his oral delivery, were determined; bringing under review many leading sophists, philosophers, and historians; and showing his right, in speaking to the people, to use their idiom, even at the risk of being called inattentive or indifferent to nobility of expression. "Ought I to speak nobly, as you call it, of base matters and base men? Ought my pauses to be invariably the same? Would Aristoteles wish that a coat of mail should be as flowing as his gown? Let peace be perfect peace, war



decisive war; but let eloquence move upon earth with all the facilities of change that belong to the Gods themselves." The conversation closes with what is too evidently a whimsical sketch of Canning under the cover of the last favorite orator of the Athenians, Anædæstatus.

The fourteenth dialogue, between Bonaparte and the President of the Senate, was a laugh at the extravagant servility of the speeches addressed to the French emperor by his officers of state; and that it was not ineffective may be inferred from Hazlitt's calling it, in his intense Bonapartism, a scandal against good taste and decency. To this conversation in its original form was appended a long and most remarkable note, of which in the collected edition portions were absorbed into other dialogues, upon the character of Bonaparte and some passages in his career; containing among other things a description of the retreat from Moscow, as fine as anything in the ancient historians. The view he took of Napoleon on this and on other occasions was, that he had the fewest virtues and the faintest semblances of them of any man that had risen by his own efforts to supreme power; yet that the services he rendered to society, incommensurate as they were with the prodigious means he possessed, were great, manifold, and extensive. He singles out, as the best kings of Napoleon's creation, Bernadotte and Louis Bonaparte, saying of the latter that from the throne he had mounted amid the curses of the people he descended amid their tears, and of both that they had given no sign, either by violence or rapacity, by insolence or falsehood, that they had been nurtured in the feverish bosom of the French Republic.

In the fifteenth conversation Landor reappeared in his own person in friendly talk with the Abbé Delille,\* and the main part of it was an attack on Boileau, which one would like to have been made less dogmatically, and with less confidence in his knowledge of the delicacies of a living language not his own. But we may well afford to leave such exquisite sense and satire as Boileau's to turn with its smile the edge of a sharper assailant, and the digressions of the dialogue are masterly. As capital things are said in it as anywhere in the series, on points and peculiarities of style, and on individual authors, modern and ancient: as where the language of Gibbon in the *Decline and Fall* is likened to the colors of the setting sun; where the fact that there is no golden mean, no safe mediocrity, in poetry, is expressed in the remark that between the good and the excellent there is a greater difference than between the bad and the good; where Homer and Virgil are said to have been excelled in sublimity by Shakespeare and Milton, as the Caucasus and Atlas of the old world by the Andes and Teneriffe of the new; and where Voltaire, in his censures of those two famous Englishmen, is described sticking to them as a woodpecker to an old forest tree only that he may pick out what is rotten, making the holes deeper than he found them, and

\* See *ante*, p. 102.

after all his cries and chatter bringing home but scanty sustenance to his starveling nest. The good Abbé finds it difficult nevertheless to approve in Shakespeare of such frightful irregularities in the matter of unities and time as if a child might grow into a man in the course of a night, or as if we could see years of history act themselves in a day. But that is exactly what we do see in his English chronicles, Lander retorts. "And indeed the histories of our country read by Shakespeare held human life within them. When we are interested in the boy we spring forward to the man, with more than a poet's velocity. We would interrogate the oracles; we would measure the thread around the distaff of the Fates; yet we quarrel with him who knows and tells us all. Glory to thee in the highest, thou confidant of our Creator! who alone has taught us in every particle of the mind how wonderfully and fearfully we are made." It may be added that this dialogue contains the substance of a talk Lander used often to mention having had with Talma (to whom John Kemble introduced him), when with a curious freedom from national predilections, the French tragedian declared our English blank verse to have a great superiority over the rhymed tragedy of the French stage; which imposed upon the actor, he said, the necessity of so breaking the joints and claws of every verse as to be able to pronounce it as if it were no verse at all, "thus undoing what the poet had taken the greater part of his pains to accomplish."

The sixteenth dialogue introduced the Emperor Alexander discussing with Capo d'Istrias the results and prospects of the Holy Alliance, and apology was made in a note for attributing to both speakers more wisdom and reflection than either possessed. Certainly to such a writer as Lander one can see that the difficulty was infinitely less to show that the great are great than to show that the little are little; and it is only a truism to add that he is most successful where the most is demanded of him. But such passages of the dialogue before us as relate to the struggle of the Greeks and foreshadow its results, as the comparisons of national character in France and England, and as the prediction that no "runic spell would be ever so powerful as the three words *Italy is free*," render it worthy of preservation; and there is a remark of Capo's about the Continental armies which the events of the year following its publication verified, and which is pregnant still with important meaning. "Pertinacity among rulers in making armies the instruments of their ambition has made them the arbiters of their fate. Soldiers can never stand idle long together: they must turn into citizens or rebels."

Briefly I will add of the next succeeding dialogue, the seventeenth, between Kosciusko and Poniatowski, that this also contained many admirable things: on the folly of the partition of Poland as even greater than its wickedness, on the small wisdom of the Poles in serving Napoleon with any expectation of service in return, and on the short-sightedness of politicians in leaving morals so much behind



them. "Beyond all doubt," says Kosciusko, "I am a feeble and visionary politician: nevertheless I will venture to express my opinion that gratitude, although it never has been admitted among the political virtues, is one; that whatever is good in morals is also good in politics; and that, by introducing it opportunely and dexterously, the gravest of old politicians might occasionally be disconcerted." The closing speech of this dialogue Julius Hare used to point to as a specimen of perfect rhythm, such as might have been deemed scarcely attainable in a language rather of thought than of sound such as ours is. But the great performer can make his instrument wellnigh what he pleases.

The eighteenth conversation, between Middleton and Magliabechi, closed the first volume; and here occurred the passages whereon contention arose between Landor and his publisher, and which were omitted in the first edition by Julius Hare. They had relation to the efficacy of prayer: but if expurgation were to be made at all, it is difficult to understand the justice of leaving in the dialogue its other reasonings and humorous illustrations directed against doctrines and practices exclusively Romish. Even Southey could see that such omissions were not exactly fair, and he declined to be a party to them. The conversation is unquestionably a powerful one, but the effect would have been greater with less offence in the tone, and there are some words spoken by Magliabechi that seem to have this objection in view. "I defended you to my superiors," he says to Middleton, "by remarking that Cicero had asserted things incredible to himself merely for the sake of argument, and had probably written them before he had fixed in his mind the personages to whom they should be attributed in his dialogues; that, in short, they were brought forward for no other purpose than discussion and explosion." In this was also let drop the secret of an occasional want of verisimilitude as chargeable to Landor as to Cicero.

## V. WHAT THE SECOND VOLUME CONTAINED.

The second volume opened with a dialogue, nineteenth in the series, between Milton and Marvell, who talk of what we should hardly expect to have been their theme, but find to be quietly characteristic both of them and of the time. Government, religion, the noblest forms of human life, the highest regions of poetry, — of these Milton talked in his happier days, and his thoughts about them all, scattered over his own majestic pages, are grandly familiar to us: but here, within sound of the riot of Bacchus and his revellers, we learn what may have been his thoughts about some wiser kinds of mirth, in what he says upon the literature of comedy. His friend Andrew has in hand the design of writing one, and this raises between them interchange of thought and suggestion not only as to its forms but its province, and its principal masters among the ancient writers. Upon

the points of management and plot we have a reproduction of what had been said so ingeniously by Mr. Hardcastle in his preface to the comedy of the *Charitable Dowager* : \* and in the higher criticism we have sayings happily suggestive of Menander, whose fragments Marvell imitates in some verses ; of Plautus, who for his clear insight into feeling and manners is declared by Milton to resemble Shakespeare more than any of the ancients ; and of Aristophanes, to whom the praise and blame are given that would naturally arise to the lips of so severe a moralist and so great a poet. While he compares his verse to a dance of bacchanals, and admits that in his joyous glades the satyrs do not dance without the nymphs, he yet brands him with the offence beyond pardon of turning into derision what is excellent, and endeavoring to render undesirable what ought to be desired. The character and writings of the wise, Milton holds to be the only riches our posterity cannot squander ; and he would punish the man who attempts to depreciate them. I will add his noble exhortation to Marvell to be ever mindful of what learning gives, and heedless of what she takes away.

“O Andrew ! albeit our learning raiseth up against us many enemies among the low, and more among the powerful, yet doth it invest us with grand and glorious privileges, and confer on us a largeness of beatitude. We enter our studies and enjoy a society which we alone can bring together ; we raise no jealousy by conversing with one in preference to another ; we give no offence to the most illustrious by questioning him as long as we will, and leaving him as abruptly. Diversity of opinion raises no tumult in our presence ; each interlocutor stands before us, speaks or is silent, and we adjourn or decide the business at our leisure. Nothing is past which we desire to be present ; and we enjoy by anticipation somewhat like the power which I imagine we shall possess hereafter, of sailing on a wish from world to world.”

The speakers in the twentieth dialogue were Washington and Franklin, who are supposed to have met on the envoy's return from Paris, and between whom are exchanged experiences and thoughts that would be likely to occur at such a time : recollections of the recent struggle ; comparisons of forms of government and religion ; confidence in the prospects of the new world which they have created, and distrust of such arrangements of the old world as their success has left undisturbed. Washington points to where, by timely acknowledgment of error, England might “recover not much less than she has lost” ; and thereupon are suggested certain remedies for Ireland, of which the principal four have claim upon attention even yet. They proceed in chief from Franklin, who would have middlemen abolished to check absenteeism, Irish gentlemen ennobled to encourage residence, the Protestant Establishment removed to arrest popery, and fisheries established to relieve the potato. The shrewd man of type professes no confidence in talking men ; thinks that no kind of good can come from keeping the understanding at

\* See *ante*, p. 237.



tongue's-length ; and is disposed to lay no small part of England's losses on her too great reliance upon orators. "I have been present while some of them have thrown up the most chaffy stuff two hours together, and have never called for a glass of water. This is thought the summit of ability ; and he who is deemed capable of performing it is deemed capable of ruling the East and West." That was levelled against Pitt, and will be found to have considerable meaning in it to this day.

The series had no conversation more attractive than the twenty-first for the quiet sweetness of its tone and character. Lady Jane Grey, called suddenly away from the companionship of her books to that other in which her life was wrecked, takes counsel from her tutor, Roger Ascham, on the duties awaiting her. Shaken by fears, the good old man strives hard to reassure himself. "Love is a secondary passion in those who love most, a primary in those who love least. He who is inspired by it in a high degree is inspired by honor in a higher." With innocent dismay she hears his sentence of banishment from her old silent friends ; and, surrendering to him those that have amused her in the arbor or the gravel-walk, makes tender intercession to retain still the companionship, by her fireside and her pillow, of the four that have taught her truth and eloquence, courage and constancy. They are Cicero and Epictetus, Polybius and Plutarch. "Read them," cries Ascham ; "read them on thy marriage-bed, on thy child-bed, on thy death-bed. Thou spotless, undrooping lily, they have fenced thee right well. These are the men for men ; these are to fashion the bright and blessed creatures whom God one day shall smile upon in thy chaste bosom. Mind thou thy husband." O, yes, she says ; she will love and will obey him, and will do her best to make his home dear to him, reading to him every evening, and opening to him new worlds richer than those discovered by the Spaniard. Nay, says Ascham,

"Rather do thou talk with him, ride with him, play with him, be his faery, his page, his everything that love and poetry have invented : but watch him well ; sport with his fancies ; turn them about like the ringlets round his cheek ; and if ever he meditate on power, go toss up thy baby to his brow, and bring back his thoughts into his heart by the music of thy discourse. Teach him to live unto God and unto thee ; and he will discover that women, like the plants in woods, derive their softness and tenderness from the shade."

This dialogue was a great favorite with Hazlitt, whose praise of it rises to enthusiasm.

The twenty-second was between Francis Bacon and Richard Hooker : the fallen chancellor seeking consolation from religion in his trouble, and giving back to Master Hooker the worth of yet more than he receives. There is much character in this little dialogue, and the style of each speaker is nicely shadowed forth. One may see it where Bacon compliments Hooker : "Good Master Hooker, I have

read many of your reasonings, and they are admirably well sustained : added to which, your genius has given such a strong current to your language as can come only from a mighty elevation and a most abundant plenteousness " : and where Hooker, in his proud humility, contrasts what little he himself knows with the vast attainments of his most noble lord : " Wisdom consisteth not in knowing many things, nor even in knowing them thoroughly ; but in choosing and in following what conduces the most certainly to our lasting happiness and true glory."

To a quite other world we pass in the twenty-third of the series, where a Spanish republican, General Lascy, and a treacherous priest and partisan of Ferdinand, the cura Merino, talk of what ought to be the rule in Spain, of the doings of the Holy Alliance, of the vices of modern governments in regard to countries foreign to their own, of the degradation and decline of the higher elements of freedom in England, and of the opportunity she had lost of placing herself at the head of the world. From the mouth of a contemptuous Spanish soldier, not inappropriately, we have language as to our houses of lords and commons which we may either for its wisdom gratefully accept, or for its want of better information charitably forgive ; but, in whatever temper the conversation is read, there is in its shrewd suggestions matter for profitable thought, and, by the side of much that may lower the confidence of Englishmen, enough also to justify and exalt their pride.

" The strength of England lies not in armaments and invasions : it lies in the omnipresence of her industry, and in the vivifying energies of her high civilization. There are provinces she cannot grasp ; there are islands she cannot hold fast ; but there is neither island nor province, there is neither kingdom nor continent, which she could not draw to her side and fix there everlastingly, by saying the magic words *Be Free*. Every land wherein she favors the sentiments of freedom, every land wherein she but forbids them to be stifled, is her own ; a true ally, a willing tributary, an inseparable friend. Principles hold those together whom power would only alienate."

Back to the antique world and its serener thoughts we are taken in the twenty-fourth conversation, where Sophocles has been summoned to the side of Pericles to congratulate him on the completion of the Piræus and the Pœcile, and where the great ruler and great writer of Athens, proud of the completeness of that glory of their city which has its foundation in the supremacy of its citizens, converse of the mighty power given to its statuary and painters to restore to the living their dead ancestors and hand down themselves to their children in remotest times. The thought rises thereupon to Pericles of how worthless an incumbrance, how wearisome an impediment, life itself may be. " We are little by being seen among men ; because that phasis of us only is visible which is exposed toward them and which most resembles them : we become greater by leaving the world,



as the sun appears to be on descending below the horizon. Strange reflection ! humiliating truth ! that nothing on earth, no exertion, no endowment, can do so much for us as a distant day." The subject is afterwards pursued by Sophocles in a form designed to suggest higher consolations. "It is folly to say, Death levels the whole human race ; for it is only when he hath stripped men of everything external that their deformities can be clearly discovered or their worth correctly ascertained. Gratitude is soon silent ; a little while longer and Ingratitude is tired, is satisfied, is exhausted, or sleeps. . . . We then see before us and contemplate calmly the creator of our customs, the ruler of our passions, the arbiter of our pleasures, and, under the Gods, the disposer of our destiny. What then, I pray you, is there dead ?" This is one of the grandest of the minor dialogues for the depth and reach of its reflection, to which there is but one interruption, where in Chloros, sold as a slave in Persia to a man who dealt largely in that traffic, one of Pitt's friends is discernible, and we discover Pitt himself as the slave-dealer who had displayed to the public four remarkable proofs of ability : first, by swallowing at a draught an amphora of the strongest wine ; secondly, by standing up erect and modulating his voice like a sober man when he was drunk ; thirdly, by acting to perfection like a drunken man when he was sober ; "and fourthly, by a most surprising trick indeed, which it is reported he learnt in Babylonia : one would have sworn he had a blazing fire in his mouth ; take it out, and it is nothing but a lump of ice."

For the successor to this dialogue, and wonderfully contrasting with it, brief mention may suffice. In this, the twenty-fifth of the series, Louis the Fourteenth is introduced with his confessor Father la Chaise, the object of it being that the speakers should unconsciously illustrate the inseparable alliance of superstition and cruelty, and satirize the ferocious religious wars of the most Christian king. It is a grim kind of humor ; but the effect desired is obtained, at the further expense of a laugh at the confessional.

The twenty-sixth conversation was between Tooke and Johnson, and was so enlarged after its first publication as to become in the collected edition two dialogues. It was upon the English language, the corruptions that have crept into it, and the restorations necessary to its correctness both in writing and speech. All his life this subject interested Landor. From early youth to extreme old age it was his hobby to be always putting forth such spellings of words as he professed to be able to vindicate from old writers ; and reclaiming to the service of the language what he alleged to have been improperly rejected as obsolete. Nevertheless it may not be said that he has gone any great way towards the settlement of a subject of unquestionable importance. He was not enough of a philologist to make always the needful distinction between what is legitimately an old English word, and what is merely a form illegitimately given to

it by changing fashions of scrivener or printer. He is full of suggestions that are subtle and ingenious ; many of his reasonings are unanswerable ; by these he has done much, by the example of his own writing infinitely more, to enrich the language, whose purity he jealously guarded and to whose dignity he largely added : but admirable as are many of the changes he insists upon, we fail to discover that he is governed, in any, by a very intelligible or uniform principle of change.

I may illustrate briefly a few of what must be called his inconsistencies. He would remove from one word, for example, all the marks of its origin ; and then, with or without reason, would as sedulously retain them in another. He would write *clame*, ex*clame*, pro*clame*, because of the Latin derivation ; and he would spell *soup* *soop* and *group* *groop*, to remove the mark of their French derivation. On the other hand, again, to retain such trace, he would write *parlement* for *parliament*, *manteau-maker* for *mantua-maker*, would strike the *i* out of all such words as *conceive*, *receive*, *perceive*, *achieve*, and would spell *allegiance*, for its derivation after *liege* not *allege*, *alliegeance*. He makes many appeals from the vulgar (in the sense of common) to the learned, in determining what to speak or how to spell ; but he has yet also the wisdom to know that few expressions can become vulgarisms without having a broad foundation, and that to have changed the scholarly gown for the homely jerkin is not always the worst that can befall a word. Upon this indeed is based one of the happiest things said in the dialogue, that whereas the language of the vulgar has the advantage of taking its source in known, comprehended, and operative things, the language of those immediately above them, flowing as it does in general from what is less clearly comprehended, is as a rule less pure. "Hence the profusion of broken and ill-assorted metaphors which we find in the conversation of almost all who stand in the intermediate space between the lettered and the lowest" ; and of which curious examples are given. In what way, at the same time, a vulgarism may become the property of the best writers, he shows by example among others of a word, "*underneath*," of which either half conveys the full meaning of the whole ; but which is significant though redundant, and was inscribed on the gravestones of peasants long before it shone amid heraldic emblems in the golden epitaphs of Jonson. Very properly he thinks it silly to argue that we gain ground by shortening on all occasions the syllables of a sentence. "Half a minute, if indeed so much is requisite, is well spent in clearness, in fulness, and pleasurable-ness of expression, and in engaging the ear to carry a message to the understanding." Yet this is forgotten when he would have us, on Addison's authority, substitute "*grandor*," the same in sound as its adjective comparative, for "*grandeur*" ; which he maintains to be as bad as if we retained *liqueur*, *honneur*, *faveur*, and other "puny offspring of the projected jaw."



The real truth however is that these inconsistencies in the endeavor to be consistent only help to show that, even if attainable, consistency would hardly be desirable. Doubtless there is something to be said for making wholly our own what we have fairly won, by putting under English laws our captives from the French and other tongues ; but there must still be exceptions, and, as to trifles in spelling, one would hardly disturb customs long established for a uniformity after all not arrived at. We must admit it to be not reasonable to naturalize some words and leave others out in the cold ; that it is not consistent to get rid of French terminations in quiver, monster, letter, pentameter, &c., and not to write also meter, scepter, sepulcher, luster, theater, &c. ; and that it is indefensible to write travesty and gayety while yet we retain reverie, or to write lie and not retain applie, relie, allie ; to write precede and not procede, accede and not succede ; to write said and paid, and not praid and staid ; or laid and not allaid, knowledge and not colledge, abridge and not alledge ; but it is to be feared that there is really no help for these irrationalities. Still, not a small service is done by remarking them ; and for students of language the dialogues of Tooke and Johnson will be always a rich collection of such peculiarities and defects as a rare mastery of English, and prolonged and unwearying investigation of its irregularities and intricacies, could alone have brought together. In other ways also they are characteristic of Landor, as a few more examples of his reformed spellings will perhaps amusingly illustrate.

Appealing to better authors in wiser ages he would write with them *finde*, *minde*, *kinde*, *blinde*, holding the retention of the *e* to be as necessary to pronunciation as its elision would be fatal in *chaste*, *waste*, or *paste*, and that to say *tim* for *time* would not be worse than *mind* for *minde*. Not seeing why we should make three syllables of *creator* and two of *creature*, he would write *creture*. The adverb *still*, to avoid confusion between adverb and adjective, he would write *stil* ; and for uniformity he would write both *til* and *until*. He cannot see why *won* should be the preterite of *win*, while *begun* is the preterite of *begin*. He thinks that, writing being the sign of speech, pronunciation should determine the spelling of such words as *referr*, *infern*, *interr*, *compell*, *dispell*, and so forth, all of which should end with the double consonant. He condemns all such words as *resistless*, *relentless*, *exhaustless*, upon the ground that no word can legitimately end with 'less' that is not formed from a substantive ; and, pointing out that a word so formed, as *moneyless*, *peerless*, *penniless*, *thoughtless*, *careless*, is necessarily not capable of a comparative or superlative, he discards as unhappy and inelegant all such phrases as *a more or most careless*, *a more or most thoughtless*, or *a more or most peerless person*. Since we write *architecture* and *sculpture*, he would write also *painture*, as in one instance Dryden does ; and if Cowley's "*pindarique*" is to be laughed at, he does not see why *antique* and

picturesque should not be equally reducible to order. As we say treacherous and ponderous he would say monstrous and wonderous, to which he would assimilate enterance and remembrance. He sees as little reason for poulterer as for masterer, maltsterer, or ministerer. He would turn the adjective circumspect into a substantive like prospect and retrospect, adding the same termination for the adjective as in the latter words, circumspective, prospective, retrospective. He declares passenger or messenger to be as coarse and barbarous a substitute for passager or messenger as sausinge for sausage. He would have rough, tough, sough, guided by bluff, rebuff, luff. He would omit the u wherever it is not sounded, as in favour, honour, and all that family; treating in the same way other not sounded letters, as the b in debt, crumb, and comb, and the s in island, puisne, demesne. He would avoid in every possible case the diphthong and reduplication of vowel, preferring, to the ordinary coat, green, sheaf, &c., cote, grene, shefe, kene, gote, dore, flore, for which and many of the like he pleads Chaucer's authority, as for worke in place of work. After ostrich he would write partrich, and he would assimilate anarchical and monarchical to the simpler patriarchal. He sees no better reason for apostle than for symble, and would, for agreement with their kinsfolk epistolary and apostolical, write apostol and epistol. Like Milton, he would write sovran and foren, both pronunciation and etymology declaring themselves against sovereign and foreign. As civil forms civility, he holds that abil should form ability; and generally as to all that class of words he would substitute il for le, as humbil, dazzil, tickil, &c. He would always write preterites and participles with t, as possest, disperst, extinguisht, refresht, nourisht, stopt, knockt, dreamt, burnt, usurpt, talkt, remarkt, lavisht, askt, mockt, defying any human voice even to utter such words as cork'd. He objects to all such inversions of active and passive as well-read, well-spoken, well-mounted; and inasmuch as lead has led for its preterite, he thinks read should have red, without the de that Byron and others added to it, for that nobody could mistake the verb for the adjective.

Reasoning thus in that particular instance, however, he is quite as ready in others to reject existing forms because they involve confusion between words identical in spelling but different in meaning; and in fact it is to be repeated, ingenious and excellent as many of his suggestions are, that in adopting, for his only guide to such an extensive change as he desires in the forms of our language, the assumption that spelling should always agree with sound unless a higher authority should interpose, and that this higher authority is to be found sometimes in the old writers, sometimes in specialties of derivation, sometimes in the mere avoidance of anomalies and singularities, he would, if able to obtain any considerable following, make only worse-confounded such confusion as exists. Uniformity is impossible, and would hardly be desirable, in a language derived from



such an infinity of sources. You may restore a language as you clean a picture by rubbing away the richness and mellowness of time. Where we are pleased, improprieties pass unnoticed, and it is well that they should. But while I thus take exception to what formed so large a part of the labors of my old friend in this interesting field, there was another not inconsiderable part for which infinite thanks are due to him. His canons of style are always sound ; throughout these dialogues, in remarks on masters of style and in illustrative examples, they find valuable expression ; and against false taste, incorrectness, and impurity of every kind, the language had ever in him an unwearied sentinel, during all his life on watch and guard. The last instance I remember was immediately before his final departure from England, when he had passed his eighty-first year, and, in a conversation between Alfieri and Metastasio published in *Fraser's Magazine*, had singled out for scornful denunciation the fashionable and thrice-detestable word *pluck*,\* an example of the very worst kind of base corruption of language. "That utterance of Landor," Mr. Carlyle wrote to me at the time, referring to this passage, "did my heart good. Indeed, the first of those two imaginary conversations is really as good as anything I ever saw from Landor. Do you think the grand old Pagan wrote that piece just now ? The sound of it is like the ring of Roman swords on the helmets of barbarians. An unsubduable old Roman ! Make my loyal respects to him the first time you write." It was the same spirit that had animated the Tooke and Johnson, burning brightly to the last.

Different in form from the rest, the twenty-seventh dialogue is more correctly to be described as a narrative by Landor of his calling at the house of an Italian friend, Cavaliere Puntomichino, who had travelled in England ; of his meeting there an Irish gentleman, Mr. Dennis Eusebius Talcranagh, who had lately published an imperial folio of eleven pages on the Wolf-dog of Erin ; and of his taking part in a conversation that followed on Italian society and manners, and on British travellers and reviewers, which in regard to these various subjects was the reverse of complimentary. Each of the three speakers has his grievance. The Irishman has paid some fellow in Cockspur Street for a favorable criticism of his folio, and says he declined other civilities of that sort, although the proprietor of one of the journals, upon ascertaining that from ignorance of custom he was too proud to review it himself, had been constantly at the heels of his groom in the hope of getting *him* to review it. The Cavaliere points out the many social failings of his countrymen, and complains of the absence of public spirit. "His only grievances are,

\* "You will suppose that by this expression he meant courage: he did so. We Italians would have said spirit, or heart, which comes nearest. But the meaning of *pluck*, until this year, had always been the entrails of animals, torn out of them, and the vilest part of them. The Romans were satisfied with *cor* and *pectus* ; their contents, *animo* and *coraggio*, suffice for us ; but what is ejected from a beast is to an Englishman the coronal of glory."

to pay taxes for the support, and to carry arms for the defence, of his country." And Landor himself, complimenting Miss Edgeworth, says bitter things of Lady Morgan, and remarking on his Florentine friend's description of the starved hospitality of the Italians, gives us one or two personal traits. "I have never been tempted to dine from home these seven years: yet I have given at least a hundred dinners in the time, if not superb, at least not sordid. And those who knew me long ago say, 'Landor is become a miser: his father did otherwise.'" As might have been expected, this conversation gave great offence in Florence.

The subject of the twenty-eighth conversation, between Hofer and Metternich, had been suggested by Southey,\* and there is good character in it, as well as capital writing. The air of his mountains is not fresher than the talk for which the Tyrolese leader at the close craves pardon of the treacherous Austrian. "Excuse me, sir, I acknowledge my error. I have been discoursing as if all the cloth in the world were of one color and one fineness; and as if a man who goes upon two legs were equal to one who goes upon eight or sixteen, with a varnished plank betwixt, and another man's rear at his nostrils."

The twenty-ninth was between the kinsmen Hume and Home; the former talking much as his essays might suggest, and making many keen thrusts which the other parries feebly. But though doubts are rather started than solved in this dialogue, its matter is full of interest; there is a remark of Hume's in the course of it, that the evil principle, or devil, was hardly worth the expense of his voyage from Persia, to which some orthodox theologians seem lately to have given their assent; and other touches of wit and humor are in the ironical philosopher's happiest vein.

In the thirtieth Mavrocordato and Colocotroni discussed eloquently the affairs of Greece, bitterly denouncing the Holy Alliance; and here occurred the suggestion, put forth with the utmost gravity, for another trial of the bow and arrow as an instrument of war.

In the thirty-first was introduced one of Landor's greatest favorites, Alfieri, talking with the Florentine Jew, Salomon; and better talk it would not be easy to imagine. He had a wonderful liking for Alfieri,† in whose intolerant liberalism, aristocratic republicanism, and fierce

\* See *ante*, p. 231.

† I might have mentioned on an earlier page that he once saw Alfieri, with whom I have often heard him say that his thoughts were in more frequent agreement than with those of any other writer. He used especially to quote him in his latter years for the remark, in which he expressed his own cordial concurrence, that Italy and England were the only two countries worth living in. I quote one of his letters: "The only time I ever saw Alfieri was just before he left this country forever. I accompanied my Italian master, Parachinetti, to a bookseller's to order the works of Alfieri and Metastasio, and was enthusiastic, as most young men were, about the French Revolution. 'Sir,' said Alfieri, 'you are a very young man. You are yet to learn that nothing good ever came out of France, or ever will. The ferocious monsters are about to devour one another; and they can do nothing better. They have always been the curse of Italy; yet we too have fools among us who trust them.'" 1852.



independence, he had all the enjoyment of his own. Here was, in another, what others might see in himself; and the weakness of it never, but the strength of it always, impressed him. "As a writer and as a man, I know my station. If I found in the world five equal to myself, I would walk out of it, not to be jostled." National contrasts in the English, French, and Italian; comparison of moderns with the ancients in regard to satirical writing; a discrimination of the gravity of wit and humor from the gayety of banter and quibble; and a masterly definition and limitation of the right provinces of satire; are the principal points of this dialogue, which closes with a noble denial by the Florentine of the saying that climate is the creator of genius. Austria had a regular and temperate climate, and not a single man of genius had appeared in her whole vast extent; Florence was subject to heavy fogs for two months in winter, and to a stifling heat concentrated within the hills for five more, and her men of genius who could count up? "Look from the window. That cottage on the declivity was Dante's. That square and large mansion, with a circular garden before it elevated artificially, was the first scene of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. A boy might stand at an equal distance between them, and break the windows of each with his sling. . . . A town so little that the voice of a cabbage-girl in the midst of it may be heard at the extremities, reared within three centuries a greater number of citizens illustrious for their genius than all the remainder of the Continent (excepting her sister Athens) in six thousand years. Smile as you will, Signor Conte, what must I think of a city where Michael Angelo, Frate Bartolomeo, Ghiberte (who formed them), Guicciardini, and Macchiavelli were secondary men? And certainly such were they, if we compare them with Galileo and Boccaccio and Dante." It was not till nearly six years after writing this that Landor became himself the owner of a villa at Fiesole which was built by Michael Angelo, and could boast that the very spot in that immortal valley where Boccaccio had placed his *Lago delle Belle Donne* formed a portion of the grounds of his own farm and vineyard.

The bad faith of the greater to the lesser states of Europe was the theme of the thirty-second conversation; Lopez Baños and Alpuente being the speakers, and their principal subjects the conduct of France to Spain, the gallantry and self-denial of Mina and the patriots, and the atrocities of Ferdinand. Here, as in most part of the conversations merely political, the subjects have passed away, and the speakers' names have ceased to be words to conjure with; yet the charm of the composition is enduring, and in all of them sayings abound that will never lose their freshness. "Little is that, O Lopez, which any man can give us; but that which we can give ourselves is infinitely great. This of all truths, when acted upon consistently, is the most important to our happiness and glory." In the mouth of Alpuente is also placed a fine characterization of his countrymen;

where, speaking of the English and their favorite oak, he says that "the Spaniard has rather the qualities of the cedar; patient of cold and heat, nourished on little, lofty and dark, unbending and incorruptible."

The thirty-third dialogue, between Lord Chatham and Lord Chesterfield, was upon the principal English philosophers, Bacon, Hobbes, Newton, and Locke; Chatham taking occasion to make unsparing assault on Plato, and Chesterfield giving dryly his assent that it *was* rather an idle thing for an old gentleman in a purple robe to be sticking pins in every chair on which a sophist was likely to sit down. We have here a difficult and complex subject treated too confidently; but the conversation is nevertheless one of the best. All the eulogy of Locke is admirable; the style throughout is wonderful for a clearness as of crystal; and there are incidental sayings of a singular beauty, as in what is remarked of Newton's famous comparison of himself to the boy gathering pebbles by the sea-shore with the ocean of truth lying all undiscovered before him. "Surely, Nature, who had given him the volume of her greater mysteries to unseal, who had bent over him and taken his hand, and taught him to decipher the characters of her sacred language, who had lifted up her veil before him higher than ever yet for mortal, that she might impress her features and her fondness on his heart, — threw it back wholly at these words, and gazed upon him with as much admiration as ever he had gazed with upon her." Often, as in the criticism of Plato, where assent is most reluctantly given, admiration is most strongly awakened; the handling of the objection to the poets in his Republic is full of masterly illustration; and the exception to be taken to the criticism altogether is not so much that the particular objections are untenable, as that the general view is incomplete. If it could be proved to demonstration to-morrow that Bacon's mind was prodigiously more vigorous and comprehensive than Plato's, that his philosophical acumen was sharper and more penetrating, and that his imagination was not only more creative, but cast from its altitude more definite and more proportioned shadows, the influence exercised by Plato, not on thinkers merely but on thought and on belief through successive ages, would remain unexplained, a thing solitary and apart, mysterious and unaccountable. Tradition is powerful and almost sacred, but will not satisfy us as to this.

The objection to Plato is resumed in the next following (the thirty-fourth) conversation, between Aristoteles and Callisthenes; which upon the whole I should be disposed to characterize as more interpenetrated than any other with intimate and accurate knowledge of the old Greek literature, character, and social life, although it contains also, under the flimsiest of disguises, a coarse attack on Metternich and Castlereagh! The period of time in this dialogue is when Callisthenes, having incurred the dislike of Alexander whom he had accompanied into Asia, has been sent back as the messenger of pres-



ents for Xenocrates ; visits his old teacher and relative Aristoteles ; and has such talk with him as might arise at such a time. Of the respective claims of philosophers and kings, of the superiority of republics over monarchies, of the debasing tendencies of despotism on the despot, and the inferiority of the sensual to the intellectual pleasures, they hold converse grave and noble. There is not a page that is not radiant with exalted thought. "The higher delights of the mind," says Aristotle, upon the wonder expressed by his pupil at his own and even Plato's youthfulness of look, "are in this, as in everything else, very different in their effects from its seductive passions. These cease to gratify us the sooner, the earlier we indulge in them ; on the contrary, the earlier we indulge in thought and reflection, the longer do they last, and the more faithfully do they serve us." And how different from those of the great king, rejoins Callisthenes, are your conquests and your friends ; united not for robbery and revelry, but joyous in discovery, calm in meditation, intrepid in research.

"How often, and throughout how many ages, shall you be a refuge from such men as he and his accomplices : how often will the studious, the neglected, the deserted, fly towards you for compensation in the wrongs of fortune, and for solace in the rigor of destiny ! His judgment-seat is covered by his sepulchre : after one year hence no appeals are made to him : after ten thousand there will be momentous questions, not of avarice or litigation, not of violence or fraud, but of reason and of science, brought before your judgment-seat, and settled by your decree. Dyers and tailors, carvers and gilders, grooms and trumpeters, make greater men than God makes ; but God's last longer, throw them where you will."

Nor less admirable is the anticipation by Aristotle himself of what is told us in the homily of Chrysostom, that neither the tomb of Alexander nor the day of his death was known.

"I have lost an ibis, or perhaps a hippopotamus, by losing the favor of Alexander ; he has lost an Aristoteles. He may deprive me of life : but in doing it he must deprive himself of all he has ever been contending for of glory ; and even a more reasonable man than he will acknowledge that there is as much difference between life and glory as there is between an ash-flake from the brow of Ætna and the untamable and eternal fire within its centre. . . . I have prepared for myself a monument, Callisthenes, from which perhaps some atoms may be detached by time, but which will retain the testimonials of its magnificence and the traces of its symmetry when the substance and site of Alexander's shall be forgotten. Who knows but that the very ant-hill whereon I stand may preserve its figure and contexture when the sepulchre of this Macedonian shall be the solitary shed of a robber, or the manger of mules and camels !"

Reluctant as I am to quit this dialogue, I will close with its exquisite little character of Phocion. "He conquered with few soldiers, and he convinced with few words. I know not what better description I could give you either of a great captain or great orator."

To the class of conversations like the Ascham and Lady Jane Grey and others to be named hereafter, prose-poems of faultless construction, made as "of one entire and perfect chrysolite," and not to have any portion taken from them without impairment of their beauty, the thirty-seventh belonged. This was the Henry the Eighth and Anne Boleyn of which Hazlitt and Hare spoke with equal enthusiasm. The delicacy of the means by which its effect is produced appears to have impressed them both alike; and certainly the art is very admirable where such extraordinary pathos is so controlled and chastened, by the delight arising from the contemplation of its beauty, as to be neither painful nor overpowering. The sensual is as distant from it as the sentimental. "The angelic purity," said Hare, "the innocence and kindliness, the affectionate simplicity of the sufferer, elevate her far beyond the reach of evil"; and he might have added, that the genius of the conception is in nothing more manifest than in showing, besides, that the very qualities that so lifted her far above guilt were those also that had betrayed her to the doubt and suspicion of it. Hare further observed it as a fine peculiarity of this dialogue, that its language was throughout quite simple, and recommended it as a study for those who conceived poetry to consist in imagery. One image there is nevertheless, where, driven to find excuse for her gayety, Anne tells her lord that the withered leaf catches the sun sometimes, little as it can profit by it; but the extraordinary beauty of the composition beyond a doubt is its quiet plainness and even homeliness of speech. It would be difficult to imagine an effect more profoundly touching than that of her closing allusion to her daughter, when at last made fully conscious of the fate awaiting herself. "Love your Elizabeth, my honored lord, and God bless you! She will soon forget to call me: do not chide her: think how young she is."

The last dialogue of the series was that of the Ciceros. The speakers were Marcus Tullius and Quintus, and the greatest beauty and impressiveness distinguished it throughout. The brothers, who had taken opposite sides in the wars closed by the second triumvirate, meet at the house of Quintus by the sea, on the evening before that anniversary of the birthday of Tullius which was also to be the day of his violent death. Sundered by civil strife so long, they have been drawn together now by the calamities of their country; hope subsided in both, and ambition silenced, the tenderness of earlier days has returned; and for the last time together, in friendly converse, they walk along the shore of Formiæ. The greatest champion of the republic contrasts, to her sorrowing assailant, the genius and the virtues fallen with her, and the rulers risen in their place; to rebuke the living Lepidus, Octavianus, and Antonius, he summons from their urns Cornelia and the Gracchi, Sertorius, Pompeius, Cato, Lucullus, Cæsar, and Brutus; the gloom and despair that surround him pass away, in the brightness of the hope that Philosophy has opened beyond them; and, in language modelled after the choicest of the treatises



and orations that bear his name, he shows himself as ready cheerfully to part with life as he had been reluctant to bid farewell to liberty. This blending of a personal emotion with the antique life of Rome constitutes pre-eminently the attraction of this dialogue ; which for the completeness of the identification of its ideal portraiture with historic truth has been frequently and perhaps justly characterized as the masterpiece of all the conversations. A competent critic has indeed declared that the sayings in it attributed to Cicero on subjects especially his own are such as might not only not have lessened but have added to his fame ; and a story was told of Lord Dudley by Francis Hare, which Landor has more than once with pardonable pride repeated to me, that during one of his illnesses in Italy he had asked a friend to read aloud to him this dialogue, and, to his friend's admiring question at the close, "whether it was not, by Jove, exactly what Cicero would have said," had himself exclaimed, "*Yes, if Cicero could have said it !*"

It would nevertheless be difficult, filled as it is with sayings Ciceronian, to exhibit their impressiveness by extracting even the best of them. The conversation is so infinitely better than anything that can be taken from it. It unfolds itself in such fine gradations as the brothers walk along the shore, their thoughts toned and tempered by skyey influences, and their spirits drawn nearer not more by conscious remembrance of the past than by that dim foreboding of some coming change, the forecast of a final quiet to which both are drawing near, which so often accompanies the approach of death. The very mildness of the winter evening, with a softness in its moist still air allied to the gentleness of sorrow, plays its part in the dialogue. As they retrace their steps, the purple light that had invested the cliffs and shore has faded off, and the night quite suddenly closes in ; of the promontories, the long irregular breakers under them, the little solitary Circæan hill, the neighboring whiter rocks of Anxur, the spot where the mother of the Gracchi lived, nothing further is discernible ; all the nobleness of the surrounding or the far-off landscape, recalling scenes of friendship and recollections of greatness, has passed away ; they see now but the darkness of the ignoble present, and as, on reaching home, they notice the servants lighting the lamps in the villa and making preparation for the birthday on the morrow, the thought at length consciously arises to Marcus whether that coming birthday, least pleasurable to him as it must be, may not also be his last. But no feeling of despondency or grief arises with it. All he has been saying to his brother has had for its design to assuage the anxieties and disquietudes attending the thought of death.

"Man thinks it miserable to be cut off in the midst of his projects: he should rather think it miserable to have formed them. For the one is his own action, the other is not; the one was subject from the beginning to disappointments and vexations, the other ends them. And what truly is that period of life in which we are not in the midst of our projects? They

spring up only the more rank and wild, year after year, from their extinction or change of form, as herbage from the corruption and dying-down of herbage. . . . Sleep, which the Epicureans and others have represented as the image of death, is, we know, the repairer of activity and strength. If they spoke reasonably and consistently, they might argue from their own principles, or at least take the illustration from their own fancy, that death, like sleep, may also restore our powers, and in proportion to its universality and absoluteness. . . . The memory of those great men who consolidated our republic by their wisdom, exalted it by their valor, and protected and defended it by their constancy, stands not alone nor idly: they draw us after them, they place us with them. O Quinctus! I wish I could impart to you my firm persuasion, that after death we shall enter into their society; and what matter if the place of our reunion be not the Capitol or the Forum? . . . Surely he deserves the dignity and the worship of a God who first instructed men that by their own volition they may enjoy eternal happiness; that the road to it is most easy and most beautiful, such as any would follow by preference even if nothing desirable were at the end of it. Neither to give nor to take offence, are surely the two things most delightful in human life; and it is by these two things that eternal happiness may be attained. We shall enjoy a future state accordingly as we have employed our intellect and our affections. Perfect bliss can be expected by few; but fewer will be so miserable as they have been here."

They had only to carry with them such thoughts as these, and death need not trouble them further. It would but the sooner bring to them the happy day when they would again meet their equals, when their inferiors could harass them no more, and society would take the place of solitude. "For there only is the sense of solitude where everything we behold is unlike us. . . . Death has two aspects; dreary and sorrowful to those of prosperous, mild and almost genial to those of adverse fortune. Her countenance is old to the young, and youthful to the aged: to the former her voice is importunate, her gait terrific: the latter she approaches like a bedside friend, and calls in a whisper that invites to rest. . . . Were it certain that the longer we live the wiser we become and the happier, then indeed a long life would be desirable; but since, on the contrary, our mental strength decays, and our enjoyments of every kind not only sink and cease but diseases and sorrows come in place of them, if any wish is rational, it is surely the wish that we should go away unshaken by years, undepressed by griefs, and undespoiled of our better faculties. Life and death appear more certainly ours than whatsoever else: and yet hardly can that be called ours which comes without our knowledge and goes without it; or that which we cannot put aside if we would, and indeed can anticipate but little. There are few who can regulate life to any extent; none who can order the things it shall receive or exclude. What value then should be placed upon it by the prudent man, when duty or necessity calls him away? . . . Everything has its use; life to teach us the contempt of death, and death the contempt of life. Glory, which among all things between stands eminently the principal, although it has been considered



by some philosophers as mere vanity and deception, moves those great intellects which nothing else could have stirred, and places them where they can best and most advantageously serve the commonwealth. Glory can be safely despised by those only who have fairly won it. . . . The philosopher who contemns it has every rogue in his sect, and may reckon that it will outlive all others. . . . Fame, they tell you, is air: but without air there is no life for any; without fame there is none for the best."

Such thoughts and speech were worthy to close a book of so great and so original a character. Possessing these two qualities to an extent that no general criticism could have adequately shown, and being of all Landor's future labors in literature the determining type and expression, an account of it sufficiently minute to save the necessity of recurring and repeated description hereafter seemed desirable at once. The thirty-eight dialogues thus first issued became in number, before Landor's death, not fewer than a hundred and fifty; but different as all these were in themselves, it was not the less the distinguishing mark of their genius to be both in their conformation and in their mass almost strangely alike; and it is this unity in the astonishing variety, the fire of an irrepressible genius running through the whole, that gives to the book containing them its place among books not likely to pass away. I have put before the reader quite fairly what the earliest dialogues were; and as, down to the very last, if I continued my review, the same wealth of character, thought, and style would present itself for description and selection, little more may now suffice than to mention as they arise the subjects chosen and the names of the speakers. The intensity and the range of mental power displayed will thus also sufficiently declare themselves. There is scarcely a form or function of the human mind, serious or sprightly, cogitative or imaginative, historical, fanciful, or real, which has not been exercised or brought into play in this extraordinary series of writings. The world past and present is reproduced in them, with its variety and uniformity, its continuity and change. When the American writer Emerson had made the book his companion for more than twenty years, he publicly expressed to the writer his gratitude for having given him a resource that had never failed him in solitude. He had but to recur to its rich and ample page, wherein he was always sure to find free and sustained thought, a keen and precise understanding, an affluent and ready memory familiar with all chosen books, an industrious observation in every department of life, an experience to which it might seem that nothing had occurred in vain, honor for every just and generous sentiment, and a scourge like that of the Furies for every oppressor whether public or private, to feel how dignified was that perpetual Censor in his curule chair, and to wish to thank so great a benefactor. "Mr. Landor," continues Emerson, "is one of the foremost of that small class who make good in the nineteenth century the claims of

pure literature. In these busy days of avarice and ambition, when there is so little disposition to profound thought or to any but the most superficial intellectual entertainment, a faithful scholar, receiving from past ages the treasures of wit, and enlarging them by his own love, is a friend and consoler of mankind. . . . Whoever writes for the love of truth and beauty and not with ulterior ends belongs to a sacred class, among whom there are few men of the present age who have a better claim to be numbered than Mr. Landor. Wherever genius or taste has existed, wherever freedom and justice, which he values as the element in which genius may work, are threatened, his interest is sure to be commanded. His love of beauty is passionate, and betrays itself in all petulant and contemptuous expressions. But beyond his delight in genius and his love of individual and civil liberty, Mr. Landor has a perception that is much more rare, — the appreciation of character. This is the more remarkable considered with his intense nationality, for he is buttoned in English broadcloth to the chin. . . . Such merits make Mr. Landor's position in the republic of letters one of great mark and dignity. He exercises with a grandeur of spirit the office of writer, and carries it with an air of old and unquestionable nobility. His acquaintance with the English tongue is unsurpassed. He is a master of condensation and suppression, and that in no vulgar way. He knows the wide difference between compression and an obscure elliptical style. Dense writer as he is, he has yet ample room and choice of phrase, and often even a gamesome mood between his valid words. There is no inadequacy or disagreeable contraction in one of his sentences, any more than in a human face, where in a square space of a few inches is found room for every possible variety of expression. . . . Of many of Mr. Landor's sentences we are fain to remember what was said of those of Socrates, that they are cubes, which will stand firm place them how or where you will." The author of this tribute gave also practical proof of the strength of the admiration that suggested it. The wish to see "the faces of three or four writers" had been one of his principal motives for visiting Europe in 1833; and when fourteen years later he had crossed the Atlantic again, he told his countrymen, among other experiences of Europe, what his intercourse had been with those three or four writers whose faces he had so desired to see. Their names were Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, and Carlyle.

## VI. HOW THE BOOK WAS RECEIVED.

In February, 1824, Southey sent to Landor the completed book, and in the letter accompanying it, alluding once more to the omissions made by himself and Hare, expressed his belief that wherever Landor perceived a passage to have been struck out he would perceive at the same time for what reason it had been omitted; the reason for every omission having been such that he was persuaded Landor



would without hesitation have assented to it, had he been upon the spot. Of the book itself Southey spoke as, with the views then held by him, it might be supposed he would ; with rapture of its genius, and with reserve of its opinions. A most powerful and original book he thought it ; in any one page of which, almost in any single sentence, he should have discovered the author, if it had come into his hands as an anonymous publication. " Notice it must needs attract ; but I suspect that it will be praised the most by those with whom you have the least sympathy, and that the English and Scotch liberals may perhaps forgive you even for being my friend."

A few months later in the same year he bade Lander be of good heart, for a more striking book had never issued from the press " in these kingdoms," nor one more certain of surviving the wreck of its generation ; and this not from the adventitious importance of the subject, but from the excellence of the workmanship. The last letter written in that year was also occupied with it, with the growth of public opinion about it, and with the talk it was making. Southey rejoiced to hear of a third volume ; spoke of subjects which Lander, and he only, could treat as they ought to be treated ; and urged him not to hesitate at sending over a fourth also. " The book is making you known, as you ought to be ; and it is one of those few books which nothing can put aside." This letter, written at the opening of December, 1824, had the additional interest for Lander of two supplementary pages in the handwriting of Wordsworth.

" I have begged this space from Southey," he wrote, " which I hope you will forgive, as I might not otherwise for some time have had courage to thank you for your admirable dialogues. They reached me last May, at a time when I was able to read them, which I did with very great pleasure. I was in London then, and have been a wanderer most of the time since. But this did not keep me silent. I was deterred, such is the general state of my eyes, by a consciousness that I could not write what I wished. I concur with you in so much, and differ with you in so much also, that though I could easily have disposed of my assent, easily and most pleasantly, I could not face the task of giving my reasons for my dissent ! For instance, it would have required almost a pamphlet to set forth the grounds upon which I disagree with what you have put into the mouth of Franklin on *Irish* affairs, the object to my mind of constant anxiety. What would I not give for a few hours' talk with you upon republics, kings, and priests — and priestcraft ! This last I abhor ; but why spend one line in declaiming against it ? Better endeavor to improve priests, whom we cannot, and ought not therefore endeavor to, do without. We have far more to dread from those who would endeavor to expel not only organized religion but all religion from society, than from those who are slavishly disposed to uphold it. At least I cannot help feeling so. Your dialogues are worthy of you, and a great acquisition to literature. The classical ones I like best, and most of

all that between Tully and his brother. That which pleases me the least is the one between yourself and the Abbé Delille. The observations are invariably just, I own ; but they are fitter for illustrative notes than the body of a dialogue, which ought always to have some little spice of dramatic effect. I long for the third volume ; a feeling which after my silence I should not venture to express, were you not aware of the infirmity which has been the cause of it. I sent a message of thanks, from Cambridge, through Julius Hare, whom I saw at Cambridge in May last. Ever affectionately and gratefully yours, Wm. Wordsworth."

With well-founded pride Landor received this tribute from two such famous men. "Your letter," he wrote on the 6th of January, 1825, "with its closing lines from Wordsworth, gave me incredible delight. Never did two such hands pass over the same paper, unless when Barrow was solving some problem set before him by Newton." He had already, on the 4th of the previous November, acknowledged what Southey said on the eve of the publication. "I never ask what is the public opinion of anything I write. God forbid it should be favorable ; for more people think injudiciously than judiciously. *Your* sentence has elated me.

'De me splendida Minos  
Fecerit arbitria.'

It is irreversible."

What meanwhile had been the sentence generally upon the book, I shall perhaps be expected to say. There can be no doubt that it produced at once an impression which it falls to the lot of few books in a generation to make that have not amusement for their principal design. Such readers as it obtained were thoroughly aroused by it. Even where its opinions met with the least favor, its mark was most decisive. It was not a book that any cultivated reader could put aside as of indifferent account ; and its power and originality were admitted in the strongest objections it provoked. On the one hand, without challenge it might be said that no book had appeared in that generation comparable to it for the variety of its claims : imagination, wit, and humor ; dramatic insight, and play of character ; richness of scholarship, correctness, conciseness, and purity of style ; extent of information ; speculative boldness ; many-sided interest ; and sympathies all but universal. On the other hand, as unchallenged might the assertion be made that never had so masculine an intellect been weakened by so violent a temper, so many durable thoughts degraded by so many momentary humors, and such masterly discrimination of praise and blame made worthless by so many capricious enmities and unreasonable likings. I do not indeed find, in the criticisms published at the time, anything to my mind satisfactorily descriptive of the book, or any real subtlety of appreciation for either its strength or weakness ; but this is fairly the tone that may be taken to express the differing verdicts of those who talked about it :



and though no great circulation awaited it at the outset, it reached without difficulty the class of readers who most sensibly influence the general opinion in such things, and have always a great deal to do with the making or unmaking of books in the matter of immediate reputation. The entire result will better appear in the sequel. But at last Landor had won for himself a hearing; he contributed to the town talk for a whole season at least; at the universities, in particular, his name became a familiar word; and men who in those days were at Cambridge have declared that decidedly the literary sensation of 1824 was the *Imaginary Conversations*, and that the last poem of Byron, even in that year of his death, had not been more warmly discussed at the bachelors' tables or in the common-rooms.

Julius Hare had formed an exalted estimate of the book. He believed of it, and retained this belief to the end of his life, that it would live as long as English literature lived. Some of the conversations he thought unsurpassed by the masterpieces of poetic creation, ancient or modern; and by the style in all of them he was fascinated in the extreme. None other so good was known to him in our language. There was hardly a dialogue which he did not think a model of what prose composition should be; and at its best, where the air of classic antiquity breathed about the speakers, the style seemed to him what Apollo's talk might have been, as radiant, piercing, and pure. But though he thus characterized as incomparable the manner of the book which he so largely had helped to bring into the world, to its sometimes questionable matter he was not insensible; from several opinions expressed in it his own shrank instinctively; and while its perversity even increased his own liking for it, as the wayward child is cared for most, he had a fear that other readers would be less forgiving. He saw the extreme probability that for some foolish faults of temper a book deserving honor in the highest might be waylaid at starting, suffer perhaps in consequence a long neglect, and not without serious injury at last emerge. It occurred to him that an attack of this kind might be so anticipated as to blunt its edge and consequence, by combining, in the same fearless review of the contents of the book, earnest expression of all the praise deserved by it with ironical indication of all the abuse to which its impetuosities had exposed it; and for Taylor's *London Magazine* he drew up such a paper. For the purpose it was excellently done, and had the effect desired. Hazlitt had indeed the first word, in the *Edinburgh Review*; but though he dealt some heavy blows at the literary Jacobinism of the Southey connection, regretted Landor's want of temper and self-knowledge, and ridiculed unsparingly his dogmatism, caprice, extravagance, intolerance, quaintness, and arrogance, he at the same time admitted his originality, learning, and fifty other valuable qualities, placed in the highest rank his delineation of character, conceded to him a power of thought and a variety and vigor of style which made him excellent wherever excellence could consist

with singularity ; and, after naming several of his dialogues from English history as taking rank with truth itself, ended by confessing freely that in the classical dialogues he had so raised himself to the level of the men portrayed in them that all narrow and captious prejudices had there been thrown aside, he had expanded his view with the distance of the objects contemplated, and into his style had infused such a strength, severity, fervor, and sweetness, as those orators and heroes had never themselves surpassed. In critical writing however blame goes so much further than praise, and the objections of the *Edinburgh* were not only put so sharply but were apparently so justified by the illustrations given, that, if the *Quarterly* had followed with unmixed severity, very grave damage might have been done. Julius Hare prevented it. The onslaught had been prepared (for Gifford's detestation of Landor \* was in no degree abated by Southey's affection for him) ; but so much of it had been cleverly anticipated in Hare's whimsical parody that on the appearance of the *London Magazine* in May, the article which the *Quarterly* designed to have published in June had to be entirely reconsidered. Coming close upon the other, the laugh would not have been against Landor. It did not make actual appearance till the end of the year, and had then become brief and commonplace enough. Southey meanwhile, having ascertained who was writing it, would probably have succeeded in obtaining more consideration for his friend if Gifford had not again interposed. "I liked everything in it," he says of the article, in one of his letters of January, 1825, "that had no reference to Landor, and nothing that had. The general tenor I should no doubt have liked better, if Gifford had not struck out the better parts ; but nothing could have reconciled me to anything like an assumption of superiority towards such a man." To Hare's paper, on the other hand, he had given eager welcome ; and he more than once declared his agreement with what Hare had said at its close, that no book had been published, since that wherein Shakespeare's plays were collected, containing so much that was excellent of such various kinds as the *Imaginary Conversations* of Landor.

Hare was nevertheless uneasy after his paper appeared. What would Landor think of it ? To understand irony is not at all times easy ; when we are ourselves the subject it is sometimes difficult ; and in this particular case there could be no doubt that all the wild and whimsical absurdity, put forth as in ridicule, had grave warrant in the book itself. Landor took everything kindly however, and Hare's acknowledgment was full of gratitude. "Few letters have ever given me so much pleasure," he wrote from Trinity College on the 14th July, 1824, "as that which I have just received from you. For, besides the gratification I could not fail of deriving from such praise, which is precious in proportion to the depth from which it comes, I had felt some doubts whether the good-will that had dictated

\* See *ante*, pp. 158 and 214.



my criticism might not have been lost sight of amidst the clumsiness and coarseness of the execution ; and I trembled lest you should think, as Taylor did, that I had given a very undue preponderance to the abusive portion. It seemed to me indeed that his opinion arose in great measure from that commonest of blindnesses, the inability to understand irony ; but the fault might also be mine ; and I was therefore delighted to be released from these doubts by such a sentence as is conveyed in your letter." The most amusing result from the article had been, he went on to say, that the criticism which already had been sent to press by the editor of the *Quarterly* had been recalled and returned to its author, that he might omit sundry passages anticipated in the parody, especially a long diatribe on the childishness of dialogues. The criticism was to appear shortly, and was to be, as might have been expected, adverse. On the whole, the critics had been favorably disposed ; but, to judge from what Hare had seen, had proved themselves to be quite as ignorant of all the principles of composition as English critics usually are. Hazlitt's article in the *Edinburgh* certainly was the cleverest he had read. "He, I am well informed, is among the greatest admirers of the *Conversations*." But Hare had little liking for Hazlitt. It was not merely that he idolized Bonaparte, but that he hated Wordsworth and Southey, with whom he connected Landor in the same feeling ; and Hare adds that the general impression of his article, though almost every passage of the book quoted had been praised, was, as everybody said, "How famously the *Imaginary Conversations* have been cut up in the *Edinburgh Review*." One thing in it would not soon be forgotten. Jeffrey had inserted a sentence wherein he had the impudence to declare that but for his discipline Wordsworth would never have written the *Laodamia* !

## VII. THE SOUTHEY CORRESPONDENCE.

And now, reserving to a later page what befell in connection with the new edition of his book and the series of additional dialogues on which already he is busily engaged, I resume my illustrations from Landor's correspondence of the ordinary course of his life and thoughts in Italy from the date of his residence in the palazzo Medici.

His self-invented troubles are endless. In June, 1822, he is in that scrape with the secretary having charge of the legation of which slight mention has before been made, who had thought proper, he says, to treat him with such marked indignity that he had requested to be informed in what part of England or France they might become better acquainted in a few minutes. The minister himself had set the example, but the subordinate carried it rather too far. "To show his courage, whenever he meets my wife in the streets he walks up and sings or whistles. This has affected her health, and I am afraid may oblige me to put him to death before we can reach Eng-

land. Is it not scandalous that our ministry should employ such men? I have a presentiment that you will hear something of me which you would rather not hear, but my name shall be respected as long as it is remembered." What it is all about one finds it difficult to discover; but we also learn that he had complained in vain to the foreign minister in Downing Street, who did not answer his letter, and that curious facts were in his possession "concerning more than one of the wretches he has employed abroad."

While this explosion was on its way, Southey had written (27th May, 1822) in accents of despair to say that Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform had become inevitable; that either would suffice to overthrow "our institutions"; and that the only remaining question would be whether Church or State should go first. Some consolation there might have been, he added, in falling before the mighty, before such men as Pym, Hampden, Milton, and so forth; but that the ruin should be effected by such people as B, H, C, H, and the house of R, was like seeing a temple pulled down by wretches who would not have been thought worthy to carry a hod for the masons at the building. But with the greatest sympathy for his personal dislikes, and for his vigorous expression of them, Landor read with equanimity Southey's doleful anticipations of ruin. "The politics of England," he replied, "are what Pitt and the Parliament made them. The Catholics should have been emancipated at the Revolution, when they were conquered; that nothing might be attributed to threats and power. I have suffered so much injustice, and have experienced so repeatedly the denial of redress, that I would gladly see the overthrow of the present system, even at the hazard of utter ruin. Those who favored the measures of Pitt, in hopes of profiting by the public plunder, cannot if they lose the game complain that they must pay the stake, particularly as they have robbed every family in England of half its property. France was revolutionized by debt; so will England be. Emancipations and reforms are harmless fooleries. The mischief is done. The B's and that set want only a mischief of their own equally lucrative to their party, and will raise the old hoarse cry of reform and religious freedom. For us the only comfort and consolation is, to have no share in, and to derive no advantage from, the overthrow of our country."

The question of the improvement of nations through their governments is a frequent subject of discussion between the friends; and it is curious that Southey, who at the time in the *Quarterly Review* was most eagerly assailing the one extreme of opinion in England, and thereby giving all his strength to the support of the other, was at the same time confessing in his letters to Landor that both extremes were so bad that if a wish of his could incline the beam, he should not know in which scale to cast it. He was disposed to think however, in opposition to Landor, that old despotisms could better be modified by a single will than by a popular assembly; and he also



thought that, let individuals and communities err as they might, it was apparent that upon the great scale mankind were improving; but at the same time he fancied that if he were in Italy he should approach nearer to his friend, and that his friend, if in England or in America, would draw nearer to him. Upon this point there are observations in one of Landor's letters (31st May, 1823) that will be read with interest.

"No man living ever bore a more constant or a more implacable hatred towards Napoleon than I; yet when I consider that both in France and Italy he respected men of worth and genius, and that not a single man of either was neglected by him, I am disposed to regret that he is not still living and reigning, particularly when all such persons as he cherished and protected are now excluded from office and treated with contempt and ignominy. Every good establishment in Italy is quite discouraged. Priestcraft raises her proud head again. Schools of mutual instruction are shut up in all the cities. Kings unite to persecute the learned. My blood boils, I confess it, at what I see on every side. I do not wish soldiers to be the reformers of states. What a dreadful condition must humanity be in, when it can find no others capable of being so, or willing to take the lead! I am comforted by your observation that mankind are improving in England. Certainly it is not so on the Continent. I mean in France and Italy. The *maestro di casa* and confessor, the old lumber of noble houses, drive out the preceptor, and take what money was applied to the better education of the family. French and English books are promiscuously swept away. Lying tales of miracles and conversions are taken up instead of them; and it is a proof of nobility to do as did *nos pères*. I agree with you that old despotisms can better be modified by a single will than by a popular assembly. But as the single will capable of modifying them does not appear once in five hundred years, we cannot wait. Despotism must be crushed whenever it can be, and by whatever means."\*

\* He had found it in his heart nevertheless to say many good words for the Russian despotism when moved thereto by his dislike of Turkey, in those days as hateful to him for unfriendliness to the Greeks as in later days beloved by him for friendliness to the Hungarians. The letter to Southey of which Augustus Hare was the bearer (at the opening of 1822) closed thus:—

"People here are in transports at the idea of a general war, thinking it certain that Austria must sooner or later take a part in it. What a state must nations be in, which, without anger or injury of recent date, feel certain of being bettered by so great a calamity! I presume that our government will act about as wisely in this business as when it took up arms against Napoleon the second time. The thing was right, but the pretext wrong. It seems to me that we might have prevented this war between Russia and Turkey, by joining with France and all the other powers of Europe to prevent the exportation of slaves from Greece, and other atrocities not sanctioned by the customs of European warfare. As it is, I hope the people of England will resist all attempts to engage them in hostilities. Never since men fought upon earth was there so just a cause as that of Russia now is. Turkey tells her plainly that she attempted to deceive her, and never thought of performing her promise, or of executing the conditions of her treaties. She must be vanquished and Russia aggrandized. This with common prudence we might easily have prevented. We cannot now declare war against Russia for becoming powerful: since this accession of power is the necessary consequence of her forbearance and her justice. We have wiser, more prudent, and more honest men than when we had the scoundrels Castlereagh and Canning, but they want energy and clear-sightedness. I must make up my parcel for Augustus Hare, nor indeed, not being a prophet, could I say a great deal more than I have said already. My children are well, which keeps me happy. I hope your son thrives, learns, and enjoys himself, to the utmost of your wishes, and that you have not quite abandoned your idea of revisiting Italy."

A few months later Landor started a subject of surpassing importance, and as to which a part of the suggestion or speculation he indulges may claim to have anticipated by several years the greatest triumph of colonization in modern time.

"There is a passage in your letter on the matter of which I reflect more often than on anything else. Few persons ask themselves what is to become of the rising generation of educated men who can find no room in the three professions. Why cannot associations be formed, and why cannot ministers patronize them, of extensive colonies in Van Diemen's Land; not colonies of thieves and gamblers and mercantile men, but of gentlemen's families (as in Canada), and well-educated young men and women? Why cannot allotments of land, never exceeding a thousand acres for each individual, be portioned out and lots drawn for them, with a few hundred pounds (on security given by their friends at home) at four per cent for twenty years? I myself would go, provided the government were republican, which at that distance could be no objection to those at home. Why cannot they treat us as kindly and as wisely as a girl treats her silk-worms? We want only leaves and perches and the liberty of working in our own way. Those who have been accustomed to the decencies and elegances of life are the only persons who will make a demand upon the industry of the mother country. I would admit no religion but that of the Moravian fraternity for public use. Others are terrible engines in the hands of despotism, and the Roman Catholic in my opinion ought to be suppressed as any association of pickpockets should be. I would oblige every priest to study and practise medicine, since the whole course of his religious education cannot well exceed twenty minutes,—namely, the commands of Jesus Christ. At his leisure he may read history,—three hours will do. I wish our divines would consider that many things said by Jesus Christ were intended for the Jews only, or at furthest for people then living. If our philosophers, too, had known this, they would have been silent upon some points, and would have found them less thorny."

Ireland is a subject that mightily interests both friends, but they are far asunder as the poles in the remedies they would apply to her. In May, 1823, Landor refers to the horrible accounts of the sister country that are sent out every post to Italy, and says he had employed a good deal of thought and time on the means of bettering her condition, intending to insert them in the conversation of Franklin and Washington; but after reflecting how little attention would be paid by those in power to whatever he might say, and that the papers were somewhat too voluminous for the dialogue, he flung them aside. Yet he remembers the substance of what he wished to recommend. Among other things, the lands in Ireland were to be valued by sworn commissioners as in enclosure acts; leases for three lives were to be granted to all cultivators; tithes to be abolished; and compensation (to a just amount) to be made both to clergymen and proprietors from the taxes raised on Ireland, all of which should, for a certain number of years, be expended on that country. England would lose nothing by this, Landor argued; for the military force, and much of the civil, might then be so reduced as to meet the



emergency. Landholders would lose nothing on the average of seven years; and the little they might lose would be abundantly compensated by security of property and person. The measure could not and ought not to be carried into effect without the general concurrence of the proprietors; but indemnity to so great an extent from government, freedom from taxes and from danger, and the pride of liberality, would appease and conciliate them. "Without the adoption of what I contemplated, and in its utmost extent, there will never be peace in that country. Her governors have not thought about it so much as I have; nor could they if they would; for I put more thought in motion every half-hour than all they united could do in three centuries." Southey found these suggestions too startling; but his view was taken altogether from a narrower ground than Landor's, and turned indeed almost exclusively on a distrust of the Irish Roman Catholics. What he said on that point, however, will be worth preserving, as well for itself as for Landor's comment. The date of the letter is 1824.

"Our prospects are blackening for a storm. The system of conciliation, as it is called, is producing in Ireland its proper and inevitable consequences. We have taken up a nest of frozen vipers and laid them upon the hearth, and now, unless we mean to leave the house to them (and the estate too), we must set to work and scotch them. A rebellion is to be looked for, the object being the separation of the two countries, and the establishment of the worst of all existing superstitions in its worst form. On the subject of that abominable system there is not a shade of difference between us; but I deduce from my detestation of it this principle: that no person who holds it ought ever to be admitted to political power. Instead of trusting them with seats in Parliament, they ought not to be trusted with the elective franchise."

"Well," said Landor to this, "I dislike and avoid all politics. But in Ireland the errors of many centuries are to be corrected. The worst of these was omitting to extirpate Romish influence when it could be extirpated easily, as in England and in Scotland. The death of Cromwell, usurper as he was, was by far the greatest misfortune that ever befell the English nation, not excepting the ministry of Pitt. How very interesting even still, is the account your 'Master' Spenser gives of Irish affairs in his times! I have often turned to it, when I could not go on with the *Faery Queen*."

Southey resumed the subject the following May. He announced to his friend on the 25th that he was going to Holland for a few weeks, partly to attack his cough by change of air, but mainly with the object of seeking for books relating to monastic history.

"For I am at war with the Roman Catholics: and having been attacked by Mr. Butler, who writes with all the civility and deceitfulness of a Jesuit, and by Milner, who breathes fire and brimstone like a Dominican high in the Holy Office, I am about to prove, in the teeth of these persons and the rabble who are raising the halloo against me, that the Romish religion is a system of imposture and wickedness. Half a volume of my *Vindiciæ* is

printed. You may suppose what work I make among the Philistines, having such a cause to defend, and in my unshorn strength. But the best part of the book will be the historical parts, in which I shall treat of an important portion of history, and throw (if I am not mistaken) a strong light upon what has not hitherto been philosophically considered."

To this Landor replied that he could do nothing of greater importance to society, though almost anything, he should imagine, more pleasurable to himself, than throwing open the vile impostures of popery. "More or less of it is adopted by all statesmen who can introduce it. On this conviction I have sprinkled as much antiseptic as I could into my *Conversations*. I had written one between Penn and Harrington. It must have been too long, had I continued it; and rather flat, I apprehend. Unwilling to lose all I had said, much of which was remaining in my mind, I have written another, — between Penn and Lord Peterborough; and it is curious that I did not insert a single thought in it of the former, though I began for that object. The life of Peterborough would be a fine subject for you. We have nothing like him, or comparable to him. He must have been as great a soldier as Mina, and he was much more than a soldier." "*Vix me ipse credens*," he resumes in the following month, "I have been reading a second time your *Book of the Church*. My hatred of frauds, fallacies, and dissensions, the church-jackdaws, I did fancy would have made me loath to approach the precincts. But the constancy of our reformers was always an object of admiration and delight to me, and you have done it ample justice." The same subject was renewed three years later, when Landor thanked him for his *Letters to Charles Butler*, and "the noblest eulogy on me that it is possible I ever can receive" prefixed to them; telling him that without any of his zeal for the Church of England he felt all his abhorrence to that of Rome, and suggesting as a remedy for such evils as the latter inflicted that all the civil distinctions between Roman Catholic and Protestant, from which at present their priesthood derived its power over their laity, should at once be removed. There was something in this view of it, though not everything.

"Without any of your zeal for the Church of England, I feel all your abhorrence to that of Rome. Every page, every argument, every fact, proves a love of truth in you. Butler seems anxious only to gain his cause and exculpate his client. The best Roman Catholics, in writing for religion, care nothing for veracity and everything for victory. In private life, in ordinary and indifferent affairs, we do not associate with men who keep bad company; the Roman Catholic, in the most momentous and most solemn, clings body and soul upon those by whom not only whatever is loose and foul is tolerated and truckled for, but who open sanctuaries for the assassin, and call him from them only to employ him. In my opinion this cursed pest is only to be vanquished by throwing down the embankments of its stagnant waters and letting them run off. Remove all distinctions between Roman Catholic and Protestant, and soon will the laity be weary of the clergy. At present they meet for mutual support and counsel; these being no longer necessary, the bond will loosen and rot away. Grant them



everything; everything at once: and if they act against the laws, punish them by the laws. If the pope incites them to insurrection or disobedience, punish him as you would do any other prince for the same offence. But of this there is no danger. Calculations of gain and interest are the only movers in the pontifical court, as in all others. Leo XII. believes as much in the *verities* of his religion as his predecessor Caius Julius Cæsar in those of his. It is a known fact that the clergy in Italy is a clergy of unbelievers. This is not the case at present in Ireland, but it will be when they have nothing else to do than to say mass. Here, the pope is not esteemed either by the higher clergy or the lower. A prefect in a school said to me, *Siede, e noi altri sudiamo*. The archbishop of Toronto spoke to me these memorable words, *La corte di Roma è la fucina di tutti i nostri guai*. Above a year ago I was conversing with two priests here in Florence on the Virgin Mary. I remarked that, whatever gentleness and tenderness she might have possessed, we saw nothing in the Scriptures to persuade us that she had so much of either as her Son had. One of them said to the other, *Vuol corbellarci*; then turning to me, *Ma, sa; sono spregiudicato anch' io*. *Spregiudicato* always means 'unbelieving' in the mouth of an ecclesiastic."

Lighter subjects also, and the old interchange of thoughts on matters personal to themselves, their books and their ways of life, occupied the letters; and some extracts as to these may not be unamusing.

The year of Landor's settlement in Florence was that in which the Byron and Southey quarrel raged fiercest. Southey's *Vision of Judgment*\* and preface had called forth Byron's *Vision* and preface; the laureate's eulogy of Landor, in the poem so confidently translating George the Third into heaven, had been followed by his antagonist's amusing inquiry whether Landor were not author of a poem as confidently consigning the old monarch to another place; † and the carte and tierce of rejoinder and reply had closed in Byron's cartel of a more mortal defiance, which Douglas Kinnaird very discreetly declined to deliver.

To Byron's published attack on Landor, Southey alludes in a letter of May, 1822, and says he rather supposes, after the advice given him in reply, that he will not meddle with either of them again. "I saw with pleasure," is Landor's answer (21st June), "your victory over Lord Byron. I have no right to complain of him. I had thrown slight upon him by avoiding him, and I had pointed him out to contempt in my *Dissertation*. You will find some ridicule on his poetry, and a severe sarcasm on his principles, in two different parts of my dialogues." But without seeing these, which indeed he did not live to see, Byron had returned to the attack on both friends; and in the thirteenth canto of *Don Juan*, which he was now writing at Pisa and

\* See *ante*, p. 288.

† See *ante*, p. 55. The editor of the last library edition of Byron (6 vols. Murray, 1855), says in a note to the preface of his *Vision*, that "it was reported of Landor that he said he *would* not, or *could* not, read Lord Byron's works, and Lord Byron resolved to retaliate upon the works of Landor. But their real feelings were those of mutual esteem. Lord Byron expressed in private his admiration of Mr. Landor's generosity and independence, of his profound erudition and brilliant talents; and the poetry of Lord Byron was panegyricized by Mr. Landor in his *Imaginary Conversations*."

which Leigh Hunt's brother published in London towards the close of 1823, had discussed the various pretenders to the laurel.

"Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway,  
And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;  
And that deep-mouthed Bæotian Savage Lander  
Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander."

Lander might still have been laughing at this, which did not reach him till the following April, and which certainly failed in moving him to any sort of anger, when the sad intelligence of its writer's death was announced to him suddenly, and he at once wrote to tell Southey that he had been affected, "even deeply affected," by the untimely death of their old assailant. "All his little impertinences against me only made me smile; and they were all provoked. His exertions in favor of the Greeks incited me to send, immediately on hearing of his death, a note to be added (I forget whether to the character of Mr. George Nelly, in case of a new edition, or to the last pages) in the forthcoming volume. I never took so great an interest in any cause as that of the Greeks, and if I had at the present time two thousand a year I would give them more than one." To everything else in that letter Southey replied, but not to this. Julius Hare had replied, however, as soon as he received the note, to say how much it had rejoiced him, and how the sudden news of Byron's death had made him grieve that at that very moment he should have contributed to diffuse such an attack as Lander had made upon him.\*

Another subject in the letters that appears and reappears frequently is, whether or not the friends might be able to concoct between them a history of their own times; a history that would not confound them, as Lander said in the preface to one of his volumes of *Conversations*, "with the Coxes and Foxes of the age." This saying reveals something of what the history might have been, and we may be thankful that the attempt was not made. Southey was not opposed to it at first; but as time went on he saw clearly that if their employment was to be history, it should be that of other times rather than their own. He put the matter very well to Lander in telling him that the difference was not greater between the atmos-

\* Influenced by Hazlitt, whom he soon afterwards saw, Lander subsequently proposed to omit this note, and received from Hare a prompt remonstrance (April, 1825), which, differing widely as I do from what is said in it of Hazlitt, I think very honorable to him. "I have been very sorry to receive in your recent letters directions to omit the fine note about Byron, who, whatever his worst enemies can say, had ten thousand times more good feeling and more principle than the new favorite who has usurped his place in your laudatory notes; and I have greatly regretted the printing an eulogium which I feel assured you will one day retract. Had you read more of Hazlitt's writings, I think you could not speak of him as you have done. He is indeed a person of exceeding talents, great cleverness and acuteness; and yet I think it would be difficult to find a single good sentence in all his works, and I know of no writer of any merit equally liable to your favorite criticisms on inaccuracy of expression. That note will be a strange contradiction to all the rest of the three volumes; and I wish much it were not to find a place in them." The result was that the note eulogistic of Byron was restored, and the praise of Hazlitt was restricted here to a complimentary mention of his *Spirit of the Age*.



phere on a fine summer's day on the top of one of their Cumberland mountains and the same air in the crowded London streets, than between his dialogues on past and on present times. The retort might have been made that this was unavoidable, and that in reality the past is better seen at its calm distance than the present in its nearness and noise ; but against selection of such a subject the argument was a good one. "When you are consubstantiating yourself," said Southey, "with Lucullus, or Cicero, or Isaac Casaubon, every thought and feeling are such as you are the better for having entertained and uttered ; and others are the better and the happier for partaking them. I should like dearly to see such a history of Rome as you and you only could write from the commencement of Augustus's reign to the end of the Antonines." To himself the temptation of trying his hand nearer home was brought close to him in 1829, when the government sounded him as to his disposition to write a history of the American war from the English point of view, as Jared Sparks had then begun to do from the American, our state papers being opened to him for the purpose. But he declined because of other tasks. "I wish," wrote Landor when he heard of it, "you had been induced to undertake the history of our times, beginning from the American war. You and myself\* are the only men capable of so great a work ; and you rather than I, from more practice, more coolness, more patience, and some other causes. It was the work I had destined to accomplish as my last and greatest ; but it can only be done in England." Yet how little of the calm and equable temper of history either of them would have brought to such undertakings, we may judge from what had passed between them two years earlier, when the news had reached Keswick of Lord Liverpool's disablement for further public service, and they interchanged thoughts about the statesman whose way to the highest office it had opened. Southey remarks to Landor that in his judgment it would be fortunate for Canning's reputation if his broken health should prevent him from taking possession of the premiership, "for which he has long been scheming, if he is not belied." In spite of his brilliancy of talent, and of personal good qualities that made him liked wherever he was known, nobody, according to Southey, would have the remotest confidence in him. To which Landor, whose favorite aversion poor Canning always was, made eager reply in March.

"What you say about Canning is no doubt well founded. Every rogue of a statesman is much beloved by his friends: Pitt was: Fox was: Windham was: Sheridan was. These, however, all yield to Canning in roguery, as much as they yield to him in abilities. Not that I value his at any great rate; but he has infinitely more than they had. Castlereagh never had rendered him any material service, and he labored to supplant him from the first moment he acted with him; but Lord Liverpool made him what he is, and he would

\* As far back as 1810 (see *ante*, p. 148) he had expressed to Southey his own desire to undertake it.

treat Lord Liverpool as he treated Castlereagh. I believe he lied, as usual, in saying he had received a letter from Burke on the commercial crash with which the country was threatened unless it changed its system. If he had received this letter, why did he keep it in his pocket for twenty years without ever mentioning it? Why did he not show it to Pitt, and the other members of the cabinet? Why did not he himself act upon it? Why did he not represent to his commercial friends at Liverpool the danger they were in, supported as his opinion must have been by the authority of Burke? In fact, Windham said in the presence of my brother Arden, at your friend Legge's, as he may remember, that Burke thought Canning a young man of great abilities, but rather a speaker than a statesman, and wanting both precision and dignity. I am not quite certain that *precision* was the word: in the rest I am exact. Now Windham would be guilty of any vile action but a lie, and was less jealous than any man ever was who was so vain. Besides, he never doubted of his superiority over Canning."

That Landor's interest in his friend's poetry continued to animate his letters, it is of course needless to say. Introducing Captain Shadwell Clerke to him in March, 1824, he described the gallant gentleman as hardly less enthusiastic than himself on the *Roderick*, and as having declared (a fact not publicly known till several years later) that Byron himself had pronounced it to be the "first poem of the time." At the close of his letter, after saying that his children are well and begin to talk English, he asks Southey to tell him everything he can think of about his, and about himself too, — excepting that if he had relaxed in the New England poem he was not to say it, his own hopes having been fixed upon it so long. The captain was returning in September, and would bring it with him if it should be printed. To such pleasant personal themes Southey readily responded always. He had written on the 29th of February, 1824,\* to report himself going on with the second volume of his *Peninsular War* and his *Tale of Paraguay*, and his little boy as just beginning to learn the Greek alphabet. He now, on the 14th of the next August, thanks Landor for the letter brought by Captain Clerke; tells him that his little boy is old enough to have begun upon the Latin grammar, being now in his sixth year; and adds that he had himself completed, on the previous Thursday, his own fiftieth year. Landor replied to this in November. Wordsworth's last letter, he told him, had mentioned his daughters and spoken of their beauty rapturously.† "The gravest and most philosophical father must be de-

\* It may be as well to mention that mutilated portions of this appear in the *Life and Letters* (III. 115) under the mistaken date of 1822, the editor supposing the allusions to the *Conversations* contained in it to have referred to "a work of Mr. Landor's on the writings of Charles Fox." I take the opportunity of adding that all the letters of either friend quoted in this second volume, as in my first, are here printed for the first time. There are no repetitions, excepting in a few lines here and there embodied in my narrative, of matter already in print.

† Other little personal notices may be worth subjoining. At the close of one of his letters (21st June, 1822) he grieves at what Southey has told him of an accident to Wordsworth in riding; says he was very fond of that exercise when young, but found it dangerous from the habit of forgetfulness it induced; has heard Chantrey's works praised highly, and hopes he will leave a bust of Southey to rank with that of Words-



lighted at this. Cuthbert will be the great occupation and great satisfaction of your life. The only thing in mine for which I am indebted to fortune is that my son is born rather late in it, so that we may amuse each other. To see the happiness of children was always to me the first of all happiness. How pure and brilliant is it in them! how soon it runs over the brink, and among what shouts and transports! Whenever my opinion is different from yours, I suspect, and am almost persuaded I am wrong. You teach Cuthbert grammar. All the woes I have suffered are nothing to what I suffered in learning grammar and arithmethic.\* Of the latter I know little still, according to the process in use; and of the Greek grammar I knew so little at seventeen that I read over the Port Royal yearly for more than twenty years. My wife's brother is going to England, and she hesitates between her younger child and her family there. But having one sister just married,† and another going to India in the spring, and about to be married to Mr. Ravenshaw, the son of a director, I think it likely she will go. I neither persuade it nor oppose it, but I shall be very unhappy without the two children she takes with her. I never thought that you were older than me, which it appears you are by about six months. I shall be 50 the thirtieth of January. We may both reasonably hope to see our children men, but I would rather see mine a child than lord chancellor. . . . You say that when you have escaped from the difficult stanza in the *Tale of Paraguay* you shall feel like a race-horse let loose. The racer I am certain has been loose all the while, and as spirited as he ever was in the vales and mountains of Asturias. I wish to put my hand upon him in this stanza."

On the 11th of November, 1824, Landor thanked him for his *Vision of Judgment*.

"The 4th of this month I received your *Vision of Judgment*, which I read through too fast, as I am apt to do, and always in the inverse ratio of what I ought. I never could bring myself to read slowly what delighted me. I

worth: gives Southey a great many hints of domestic medicine, by which his little boy may be saved from bilious attacks without resort to the "fashionable poison calomel"; and gives good account of the health of his two children. "A very wise man, Mr. Mogg, told me that he was wretchedly bilious, and that by drinking a glass of cold water for breakfast, instead of tea, he could digest anything. There is nothing less trifling than these apparently trifling pieces of information." He adds that the heat in Florence had been beyond all precedent. "Seven horses have fallen down dead, resting in the streets, within four days. I had this from Dr. Cassini, who lost one, on the shady side of the road." And he ends by telling Southey that certain books he was about to send would find him if directed Palazzo Medici Tornaquinti, in which house he should "probably end his days." In another letter (6th January, 1825), after saying that Wordsworth does not tell him whether he goes on with his great work, he adds what he calls another trifling no-trifle. "It appears to me by no means a difficult thing to write without a great exertion of the eyes; and a gray or bluish paper may be chosen, which is of considerable importance to those who write much."

\* See *ante*, pp. 8 and 13.

† To "Major-General Stopford, adjutant-general in the army of Columbia," to whom Landor had just dedicated the first volume of the *Conversations*. Between him and the Stopfords the most affectionate relations were maintained to the very last, uninterrupted and unabated.

resolved, on the first reading, to lay it aside for an entire week. My second reading (of this morning) was as slow and deliberate as I could make it. Never did I suppose it possible to give such harmony to English hexameters. The last line in the first page stopped me; nor can I scan it, unless you admit three spondees at the close. In p. 28 you have made the third syllable of *diaphanous* long. It is not so in English or Greek, *φαῖνω. ἔφᾶνον*. In prose the accent of similar compounds, and many others, is on the second syllable, such as *ἀνάβασις*. Its derivation from *φαίνω* gives it no prerogative. In p. 34, 4th line, I should read more easily if *and* were taken from the beginning. I think you are somewhat partial in admitting Taylor and excluding Barrow. In p. 39 I am doubtful whether I read as I should do, 'That its tribute of honor, poor,' &c. You surely do not make | *hōnōr pōor* | a dactyl; and yet, unless you do, the cæsura is wrong. I have seen another (and thought I had marked it with my pencil) where the cæsura seemed to me amiss. You have overcome what I should have conceived to be insuperable difficulties. With all my practice in Latin heroic verse, having written at least ten thousand, I am certain I could not have written any one page of your *Vision of Judgment*. The only Latin metre I ever tried in English is the sapphic. This is extremely easy. When I was at Rugby I wrote a vast number, and some few at Oxford. . . . \* Our own heroic metre is so admirable as you manage it, that I am sorry you exerted your powers in the Latin; astonished as I am at your success. For I am certain that nine in ten who read poetry with delight would have read this with greater, if you had not leapt from your own summit of the mountain to the other.

"I receive no letter from any literary friend in which there are not some inquiries whether I know what you are doing. I can reply to this more easily than to your magnificent eulogy on me in your preface. The printer has been twice incorrect in the quotation: *nescio quid ac verè epicum* is the reading, I think, and *procuderet*."

To this on the 11th of December Southey replied; and what his letter says of poetical measures, of his reasons for preferring the hexameter over both the Spenserian stanza and the heroic blank verse, and of a subject proposed by him for a new poem not elsewhere named in his letters, will justify its preservation.

"My *Book of the Church* and the first volume of the *Peninsular War* ought to have reached you by the same conveyance with the *Vision of Judgment*, Murray having been desired to send them to your publisher at the same time that Longman despatched the others. If they have not reached you, let me know, that they may be sent with your third volume. The misprints in the quotation from your essay vexed me when I saw them. Your book arrived when the proof-sheet was before me. I inserted the note in a hand so legible that I thought it might safely be trusted, and therefore did not require a *revise* of the sheet. But printers make wicked work, even when they are not trusted. The line in the first page at which you stumbled was ruined by their dropping a letter at the press after the sheet had been corrected, to the destruction of the metre. *Glarumara* is the name of the mountain. The *and* at p. 34 is redundant, and only inserted to lessen a little the catalogue-like appearance of a list of names. The other two lines I read thus:—

'Pure it | was and di | aphanous. | It had no | visible lustre.  
That its | tribute of | honor | poor though it | be was withholden.'

\* See *ante*, p. 17, for some lines here omitted.



There is no difficulty in writing English hexameters upon the principles of adaptation on which I proceeded. They are not more difficult than blank verse, and infinitely easier than the complicated stanza of Spenser; which I shall never again attempt when my present task is over, on account of the time that it costs me. I am not so certain that I may not write in hexameters again, a little perhaps for the purpose of maintaining against the multitude what I know to be a right opinion; but more because the character of a poem is greatly modified by the metre in which it is cast. A new measure leads to new combinations of language, and prevents all danger of repeating one's self, of which there would be some were I to write another long poem in blank verse. I think (it is as yet a mere thought) of a Portuguese subject, — the first deliverance of Portugal from the Castilians: tempted to it by the character of Nuno Alvarez, from whom I verily believe that of Amadis was drawn, and by the circumstance that his elder brother (a most excellent man) took the other side. I know of no subject which would afford two characters so striking in themselves and so strikingly opposed."

None other of Southey's books reported in that last letter as on their way had arrived, when Landor replied on the 6th January, 1825. He was most anxious to see the *Colloquies*, he now told him, and he hoped he would abandon his idea of writing a larger poem in hexameters. "The Latin heroic verse never will give the same pleasure, whatever may be the wonder and admiration it excites, as your own in *Roderick*, to any man whatever; and to an immense majority of readers its harmony will be in great part lost. Be contented with having done what no other man could do, and with having proved what hardly any one could have believed." On the 25th of the following May, Southey wrote again to say that at last he was at press with the *Tale of Paraguay*, that it was to be published next month if not delayed by the engraving of the plates proposed to be given with it, and that Landor should at once receive it. He added that Cuthbert and his sisters were going on well, but that he was himself the worse for the heat, was going to Holland for a month to set up, and hoped to return in tolerable repair. "I am heartily glad," replied Landor (5th July, 1825), "to have so good an account of your family, and wish that you yourself were nothing *the worse for wear*: but as the world is and will be the better for it, we must strike the balance with equanimity. But surely it is time now to consider health and ease above all other things, and to make application a mere habit, which, even as such, ought to slacken as we advance in years. Francis Hare dined with me yesterday; and was here a few minutes ago, just when I was at the post-office. He will think himself most fortunate to be at Florence when your books come. I hardly know whether to congratulate you on having completed the *Tale of Paraguay*. Nothing is so delightful as the progress of such a work. However, there is no doubt that the completion of *printing a thing* is among the foremost subjects of congratulation."

In all the letters of the friends, which have indeed no pleasanter

passages, their families of books and children alternate in the confidences thus interchanged between them. "Till we become parents," Southey wrote in 1823 (8th May), "we know not the treasures of our own nature; and what we then discover may make us believe that there are yet latent affections and faculties which another state of existence may develop." The remark originated a very beautiful passage in the dialogue of the Ciceros, the first draft of which Landor had just sent over. "I am delighted," he says (31st May), "with your observation on the pleasure we derive from our children.\* It induced me to remember that I had not attributed to Cicero what I should have done on this occasion. After the sentence on the pleasure of meeting his friends in a future state, I would add, &c." The addition made,† he continues: "Before I wrote this conversation, I would on no account open Plato. I have since read twice over his dialogue of Socrates, and am not so discouraged as I might have been. I have given Cicero his variety, and his rambling from topic to topic, ever pardonable in a conversation between two; but the few touches of paternal tenderness I now give were wanting, and I should have passed many sleepless nights at the faultiness of my work if I had omitted them. For I have attempted in every conversation to give not only one opinion of the speakers, but enough to show their character."

Replying to former kindly inquiries in that same year, Southey had told his friend that Time was setting his mark upon him, but

\* "You say nothing," he remarks in a subsequent letter (5th January, 1825), "about Cuthbert. I wish always to hear, not only of his health, but of his studies: since, if I lay down any plan, which I ought to do, for Arnold, I would wish to follow yours. Tell me whether you employ a grammar in teaching the Latin, and what. At present I have thought only of the English and Italian: and proposed to add the French while the organs are flexible. I began with it at eleven or twelve, and yet I never could pronounce it quite correctly, although I have resided at two different times nearly two years in France."

† The reader will not be sorry that I should subjoin a portion of this addition here. I copy it from the letter, which does not differ from the passages as printed. "The pleasure a man receives from his children resembles that which, with more propriety than any other, we may attribute to the Divinity: for to suppose that his chief satisfaction and delight should arise from the contemplation of what he has done or can do, is to place him on a level with a runner or a wrestler. . . . And yet, ah Quinctus! there is a tear that Philosophy cannot dry, and a pang that will rise as we approach the Gods. Two things tend beyond all others, after philosophy, to inhibit and check our ruder passions as they grow and swell in us, and to keep our gentler in their proper play: and these two things are, seasonable sorrow and inoffensive pleasure, each moderately indulged. . . . If ever you have remembered the anniversary of some day whereon a dear friend was lost to you, tell me whether that anniversary was not purer and even calmer than the day before. . . . When my Tulliola was torn away from me, a thousand plans were in readiness for immortalizing her memory, and raising a monument up to the magnitude of my grief. The grief itself has done it. . . . The Gods, who have given us our affections, permit us surely the uses and the signs of them. Immoderate grief, like everything else immoderate, is useless and pernicious: but if we did not tolerate and endure it, if we did not prepare for it, meet it, commune with it, if we did not even cherish it in its season, much of what is best in our faculties, much of our tenderness, much of our generosity, much of our patriotism, much also of our genius, would be stifled and extinguished. When I hear any one call upon another to be manly and to restrain his tears, if they flow from the social and the kind affections, I doubt the humanity and distrust the wisdom of the counsellor."



laid his hand gently ; having as yet taken nothing from him but the inclination for writing poetry, though an annual catarrh had for some years severely shaken him. To this Landor now rejoined that he could not consent to attribute to time the disinclination Southey felt at present to write poetry. That inclination, he suspected, was periodical and not regular. History, of all things, was the most unfriendly to it, — worse than geometry. “That catarrh of yours might be cured forever by a few months’ residence here in Tuscany. I have an immense palace, with warm and cold baths, and everything desirable. Why not come over ? We will visit Vallombrosa and other delightful places together. Here are several public libraries, cool and quiet ; and you will find the most perfect freedom from all interruption both within and without.”

Two years later (27th September, 1825) there are other references to this palazzo and to his life in Italy, which may be thought perhaps worth preserving. The old mingled yarn is in them. They tell us of sickness and idleness : of another child born to him (the last) ; of a general intolerance of talking creatures, with much kindly tolerance of the dumb creation ; of an ever-boiling indignation against actual or imaginary enemies of freedom ; of troubles rising from other heats besides his own ; of the consciousness (founded on nothing particular) that by the rulers alike of Italy and England he is marked out for persecution ; and of his grim satisfaction in feeling that he is no contemptible man who can have managed to exclude from every kind of preferment in the state not only his chattering children then in the next room to him, but his posterity to the latest descendants !

“I have been doing nothing for some time, not even reading ; for my annual quinsy returned upon me and confined me eleven days, being followed, as usual, by a bilious fever. This affects the eyes, and indisposes one from books. On the 1st of last month I had another son, born unhappily at seven months, yet doing well and even strong. The English here talk of one of our vessels having been detained by the Austrian squadron before Mesolungi.\* Some say it was a merchant-ship, laden with stores ; others that it was a brig of war. O for Lord Cochrane with a couple of frigates under the arsenal of Venice ! But every Christian power is friendly to Turkey and hostile to Greece. Freedom is the only bad thing in their eyes ; to destroy which they care little for making the people indifferent to the religion of their country, and persuaded that any other is as good, if not better.

“How have I envied you the coolness of your lake and mountains all this summer ! I have a delicious marble bath adjoining my bedroom ; but the water was almost as warm as the air. My favorite walk along the Arno has also been rendered impracticable. The police has issued an order for killing all stray dogs ; and it is impossible to walk upon the banks of the river without seeing those creatures rolling down, which perhaps at the same hour the day before were displaying so much happiness and fondness and fidelity. My children in the next room are chattering French, and contend-

\* Missolonghi.

ing in Italian on the propriety of each other's expressions. You are right to teach Cuthbert Latin. The learned languages will be of little or no use to my children. They and my latest descendants will be excluded from every kind of preferment in the state. I am no contemptible man who have insured all this."

Let me add that parcels of books are continually interchanged, the arrivals being sadly irregular, and the losses occasionally great. Everything of Southey's and Wordsworth's, with others they thought likely to interest their friend, went out to Florence; bounteous are the returns in kind from Landor of old books picked up in Italy; and of frequent recurrence, in the letters from England of both friends, are complaints of delay or miscarriage, sometimes of total loss, and (from Wordsworth oftener than Southey) of damage from salt water. "I am truly sensible of your kindness," wrote Wordsworth at the close of 1823, "as testified by the agreeable, and allow me to say valuable, present of books from your hand; but you will be mortified to hear, as I was bitterly vexed, that some of them have been entirely spoilt by the salt water, and scarcely one has escaped injury. The two volumes *de Re Rusticâ* in particular, which I did not possess and had often wished to consult, are sorely damaged, the binding detached from the book, the leaves stained and I fear rotted. The venerable Bible is in the same state; indeed, all to pieces. These are such unpleasant facts that I doubt whether I ought not to have suppressed them. You promise me a beautiful copy of Dante; but I ought to mention that I possess the Parma folio of 1795, much the *grandest* book on my shelves, presented to me by our common friend Mr. Kenyon, who, by the by, is happily married since I last wrote to you, and has taken up his residence at Bath."

Southey was more fortunate in receiving safely what had been sent to him, though by the same ship; for in a letter of nearly the same date he tells Landor that he found the box of books on his return, and they had escaped all damage from the seas. "As yet I have only had time to place them upon my shelves, and to see that many of them are very curious." His following letter is filled with particulars of a lost parcel sent from England; \* but in that which succeeds he has again, while Wordsworth makes further complaint, to congratulate himself "that the books you sent me were lucky enough to escape all injury." There is a fate in such things; and though boxes of books might stray into other houses meanwhile, they were sure to

\* "It is quite unaccountable what became of the books which were sent with the *Vision of Judgment*. There were Humboldt's *Personal Narrative and Researches*, the former five vols. in six, the latter two; Wordsworth's *Memorial of a Tour on the Continent* and his *Ecclesiastical Sketches*; my own *Book of the Church* and the first volume of the *Peninsular War*, with a little volume of *Odes* and the *Expedition of Orgua*. They were sent by Longman, and received by Taylor. Thus far is ascertained; and Taylor's people say they were packed with the *Vision of Judgment*. I have a note before me from Jackson and Sons saying that the case was shipt on the *Agenora*, Captain Greenwell, which vessel was consigned to Messrs. Grant, Pillans, and Co., of Leghorn; and to that house they refer you for information."



find their way to Southey's at last. "*He*," wrote Wordsworth to Landor in January, 1824, when describing more damage to his own from the water-rats, "appears to be accumulating books in a way that, with my weak eyes, appalls me. A large box of them, directed to him, has just strayed into my house, through I know not what blunder in the conveyance." Southey was in London at the time; but Wordsworth adds a pleasant picture of him and his. "You hear so often from Southey that it is wasting time to mention him. I saw Mrs. Southey and four of his children the other day, two of the girls most beautiful creatures. The eldest daughter is with her father in town. He preserves excellent health; and except that his hair is grizzled, a juvenile appearance, with more of youthful spirits than most men."

A characteristic letter of Landor's on these bookish misadventures acquaints us also with the sort of books that were exposed to such perils of the sea. It is dated the 22d of March, 1824. "Wordsworth again tells me that the books sent him are ruined by the salt water: if yours are in the same condition let me know, for I will obtain indemnity for such criminal negligence. I am going to trust these fellows once more. What I could recover of the books stolen at Leghorn, together with some others, are embarked on board the brig *Malvina*, Captain James Brook, for London. On the other side is a list of them. I have also sent another small box to Hare, and one to Wordsworth, by the same vessel." Then, after alluding to the *Conversations*, and to sundry additions and insertions which even at that last hour he had been sending to Taylor, which if too late for insertion were to be added in the notes, or even after, he gives the list.

*Folio.*

1. Alberti Magni ad Logicam pertinentia. 1506. 2. Italia Magini. 3. Valerius Maximus. 1503. 4. Tullii de Officiis. Venetiis, 1508. 5. Plinius Secundus. Forbini, Basileæ, 1525. 6. Commentaria in Plinium. Parisiis, 1530. 7. Divus Thomas in 8 Polit. Aristotelis. 1514. 8. Description historique et geogr. de France. 9. Fortificazioni di Buonanto Lorini. 10. Begole Militari di Mebys. 11. Ptolemæi libri 8. 1535. 12. P. Jovius. 1578. 13. Panvinii Pontificum Elogia et Imagines. 1533. 14. Solinus et Pomponius Mela. 1509. 15. Fulgosius. 16. P. Æmilius de rebus gestis Francorum. 17. F. Aquinas Fallaciæ. 1477. 18. Budæus. 1557. 19. W. Burlæi Porphyrii et Aristot. explicatio. 1481. 20. Cansæi Romanum Musæum. 21. Tortelli Orthographia. 1484. 22. Vita di F. Eugenio di Savoia.

*Quarto.*

1. Illuminated Ms. of Ant. Panormita. 1478. 2. Ambrosii Dictionarium Biblicum. 1478. 3. Joh. Chrisostom (black letter). 4. J. Bussieres Historia. 2 vols. 5. Memorie Storiche di Sagredo. 6. Casauboni Epistolæ. 7. Poesie di Casalde. 8. Camilli de Questiis Inarime [?]. 9. Achillis Bochiî Symb. (*in Symb.* 18 is a guillotin). 10. Relation of F. Cortes. 1524. 11. Julius Pollux. 12. Tomasini Elogia clarorum Virorum. 13. Epistolæ Leonardi Aretini. 2 vols.

*Smaller.*

1. Epist. of St. Jerom (*for Wordsworth, to whom the other volume is sent*). 2. Sermones Funebres. 1492. 3. Vita di M. Aurelio. 4. Rivoluzione di Napoli (Giraffo). 5. Poesie di Manso. 6. Poesie di Luigi Alamanni. 1532. 7. Ordini del Cavaleare (Grisoni). 1553. 8. Opusc. multarum bonarum Artium (black letter). 9. Wecker de Secretis. 10. P. Alois Poemata (*sent by mistake to W. instead of St. Jerom*). 11. Historiæ Imperatorum. Colinaeus, 1531. 12. Gregorii Turonensis. Parisiis, 1561. 13. Leonis Papæ Homiliæ. 1573. 14. Meditationes Sanctorum (black letter). 15. Guerra di Candia. 16. Scioppius Suspectæ Lectiones. 17. Barbarini Poemata. 18. Ms. of Voezuighi address to Filippo Buonaparte from the siege of Vienna. 19. Regole di Fortunio. 1534. 20. Di Vita Christi di Andilly. 21. Epistolæ Pauli Sacratæ. 22. Il Danubio. 23. Remundi Epigrammata. 24. Crucii Epistolæ. 25. Opuscula Spirituality. 1537 (*the engraving at the end designed by Titian*). 26. Ant. Cerrusi Carmina. 1550. 27. Ludovico Dolce Modo di accrescere la Memoria. 28. Greg. Nazianzenus. 29. Kenelm Digby, Theatrum Sympatheticum. 30. Acarisii Quæstiones. 31. G. Hornii Orbis Politicus. 32. Rime di Ludovico Rota. 33. Boetio di Consolaz. Philos. (black letter). 34. Confessions reciproques, &c., &c. 35. La Divina Settimana. 36. Ode di Casoni. 37. Christianas Vidæ [?]. (Gryphius). 1566. 38. J. Propiniani Orationes. 2 vols. 39. Congiura de' Fieschi. 1508. 40. Epist. Manutii. Aldus, 1529. 41. Sphæra Mundi. 1490.\*

Southey's latest news of his own and Wordsworth's undertakings were sent to Landor in February, 1827. He was then busy with his long-deferred *Colloquies*, which at last were in the press, and with the closing volume of his *Peninsular War*, which was to be ready by Christmas if he lived and did well. Wordsworth was printing a new edition of his poems, which he was rearranging and enlarging. Some fruits of past labor, too, would shortly reach Landor. Mr. Kenyon was really to go into Italy that year, and would carry to Florence the *Tale of Paraguay*, some letters in reply to Charles Butler on the Roman Catholic religion which he was very sure Landor would like, and the second volume of the *Peninsular War*. These do not seem however to have reached Landor until late in the following year, when (November 28th) he acknowledges their arrival. "The poem first attracted me. I detest theology and shrink from controversy. What a pity I thought it that the innocent poor creatures" (the lovers in the poem) "could not be left in the enjoyment of both a purer mo-

\* Two years earlier he had thus described to his uncle Hill (*Letters*, III. 287) a similar consignment sent him by his friend. "Two or three days ago I received a rich present from Landor, — threescore volumes, of all sorts and kinds, none that are without value, and some that are of considerable worth. The only one connected with Portugal is *Orosius de Nobilitate*, 1542, printed at Lisbon. There is the *Speculum Historiale Vincentii Beloacensis*, 1494; a folio *Terence* printed at Milan without a date, not I think later than 1500; a Milan *Sallust*, 1501; *Laurentii Vallensis Opus Elegantiarum Linguae Lat.* 1487, — all folios; a great many volumes of Italian poetry and modern Latin; one volume of poems in the Genoese, and another in the Neapolitan or Sicilian dialect, I know not which; and an account of the sacking of Rome in 1527, by Jacopo Buonaparte who was present, first printed in 1756 at Lucca with the false date of Cologne, and suppressed by the Austrian influence, so that very few copies are extant. It is a long while since I have had so miscellaneous a cargo of varieties." And see *ante*, pp. 282, 284.



rality and a purer religion than professional men are likely to reach ! Their death, though happy, is most affecting, Poetry opens many sources of tenderness that lie forever in the rock without it. I doubt whether the description of a heavy calamity would have moved me more than the placid end of these lovers." But still another year had to pass before the long-looked-for *Colloquies* reached Florence. The lady, now Mrs. Hodson, to whom as Miss Holford he had written so well and wisely of Wordsworth \* long before he had any personal intercourse with the poet of Rydal Mount, had received them from Southey, and intrusted them to a young artist whom she was commending to Landor's kindness.† Acknowledging their receipt at the end of July in that year he says : " All the pleasure I received from your most argumentative and eloquent *Colloquies* was less in its intensity than my sorrow at the death of your uncle, Mr. Hill. For I well knew the unhappiness it must have caused you ; and not only you and your family, but many deserving men unconnected with him in relationship, to whom his friendship and wisdom would have been unerring guides through life. Although I saw him but once, I remember his features perfectly, and discover, which I should not have done without your remark, their resemblance to Sir Thomas More's. But his countenance, I think, was of a loftier cast than that shrewd and witty man's. The one would rather die in defence of his opinion, and the other in defence of his friend."

With one further reference of the date of 1827, I will now pass from the Southey letters to Landor's correspondence with members of his family. In the March of that year he told Southey that Francis Hare had urged him incessantly to reprint his poetry, and that he meant to do so. He should include *Count Julian*, *Gebir*, about half those printed in the *Simonidea*, and some trifling ones written since. The *Julian* would be unaltered ; every reference to modern times and things would be omitted from the *Gebir* ; ‡ and he

\* See *ante*, p. 194.

† " I wrote to Mrs. Hodson from Lucca," Landor replied to Southey's mention of that lady's inquiries after him, " and I hope she received my letter ; of which there is some doubt, as I sent it by a waiter through a shower of rain, and with a sixpence to pay the postage : two things much against it." " Your letter reached Mrs. Hodson," says Southey in reply : " so that you see there is one waiter whose conscience is proof against a sixpenny temptation. Methinks he deserves a place in the Legion of Honor. A letter of mine at Geneva was destroyed for the sake of a smaller sum."

‡ Every reference, he meant, to Bonaparte. He had already publicly apologized for his exaltation of him in *Gebir* ; and the passage, which appeared in his preface to the Latin poems in the *Simonidea*, is so characteristic that I shall append it here. " Si prolixior quam par est videatur præfatio, paucis habe, lector, rationem. Brevisssimo quidem operi insisto, me contra detrectatores meos, parum cognitos, defensurus. Nulla enim ætas aut magis superbum aut minus arrogantem tulit. Est in Gebiro meo quod dolet pudetque scripsisse : in alterâ editione scriptum celare aut prætermittere designabar. De laudibus Bonapartis loquor. Quis autem, ut illustribus exemplis utar, Ciceroni vitio vertendum censeat, quo auctore statuum equestrem, eamque in rostris deauratam, Senatus, ut nemini antea, Marco Lepido poni decreverit ; cum ejusdem post modo scelus amentiamque vir ille prudentissimus ac civis optimus S. C. compresserit. Juvenem virtute bellicæ præclarum juvenis laudavi ; mendacem, sicarium, veneficum, eo tempore pauci comperiant ; nobis haudquaquam notum aut etiam sus-

would give some Latin pieces. He had just written one stanza to add to a piece that Southey liked in the old time : \* —

“Where are ye, happy days, when every bird  
Poured love in every strain!  
Ye days, when true was every idle word,  
Return, return again!”

But he doubted whether there was any merit in them, and he was certain that in the collection he was making he should leave nothing for gleaners in after-time. “I am now indeed induced to reprint a part, lest hereafter some person should reprint the whole. I hope the rest will never be lookt for or thought of.” He expressed the same wish in the preface (dated from Florence in January, 1827), remarking with equal truth and good sense that it is only the wretchedest of poets that wish all they ever wrote to be remembered, and that some of the best would be willing to lose the most. The volume was published in 1831; but not many readers, and still fewer purchasers, were attracted to it.

In his dedicatory words to Francis Hare he says that it was at his persuasion, and through his attention, that he published his *Imaginary Conversations*, most of which, “unless you had animated and incited me, would have remained forever unfinished.”

## VIII. FAMILY LETTERS.

With his mother Landor always corresponded regularly; and his birthday never passed without a present from her which made small but welcome addition to his income. All her letters, shrewd and sensible to the last, have the affection of home about them. They have some sort of encouragement for him always; give him only kindly glimpses of the past; never tire of looking forward to a future when he shall be again among the county neighbors, of whom they send him all sorts of news; express not much interest, it must be confessed, in his literary achievements; but display, every one of them, the utmost motherly solicitude for the welfare and the future of his children. I will show this by a few extracts, in continuation of those formerly quoted,† where she and her son alike show points of character; and it is worth remarking that her handwriting is as well formed as his own, though by wider lines and larger letters it is fifty times more legible.

In 1822, sending him only the county news, she tells him that

pectum erat. Has laudes postea vellicabant, quibus non ita Bonapartis essent quam nostræ graves.” In the same preface (the Latin poems including the verses to his old master James, before quoted, p. 118) there is an allusion to his Rugby days, which I overlooked in speaking of that time. He admits the insubordination which gave offence to his old master. “Nocte intempestâ aliquando excubui, libros terens quos interdum neglexeram: dies enim sæpenumero venando consumebam, aut fundam jaciendo, aut pugnis agrestibus conserendo manus.”

\* In the *Simonidea*, beginning, “As round the parting ray,” &c.

† *Ante*, pp. 292, 293.



Leamington, to the immense annoyance of Warwick, is becoming quite a fashionable watering-place ; and she describes her daughters meeting the young ladies of Studley Castle,\* “handsome fine girls, but not like their mother in beauty or manners.” In the December of that year Landor sends her a miniature of his boy Arnold, who seems to her “all fun and merriment, and looks a happy little fellow. These indeed are his happiest days ; but I hope in his future years he will not have a hard lot, if he is blessed with health and knows his duty to God.” In April of the following year she says that she always feels gratefully, amid her growing weakness, that she had lived to an unusual age with almost every happiness she could wish. On his forty-ninth birthday (30th January, 1824), which oddly enough she mistakes for his fiftieth, she thanks him for having sent her a picture of himself, which she is certain must be a good likeness of him as he then was. He had said he was so altered that she would not know him ; but she had him too constantly before her eyes ever to forget his face, “and though this day you are fifty, I hope you will have many happy years yet to enjoy. I think sometimes it must be impossible that I should have lived to see you this age. Surely it is time I should make room for others, for I have passed my eighty-first year, have had as many blessings as fall to the lot of mortals, and am very willing to go. Who would wish to outlive all their friends?”

Her next letter in that year mentions the death of Lord Byron ; “a man of great abilities, which had given him the power of doing much good, which he failed to do”: and her next, the publication of the *Imaginary Conversations*, which had now been out between four and five months. “I have heard you have a publication just come out. For God’s sake do not hurt your eyes, nor rack your brains too much, to amuse the world by writing : but take care of your health, which will be of greater consequence to your family.” Nor had she anything much more encouraging to offer to her son’s ambition even after hearing that all the world were talking of the book he had written. “I have heard your late publication highly spoken of by many ; but as I am no judge, I shall say nothing relating to it. I wish you to take care of your eyes and health, and let the world go on as it has done. I think of the fate of Lord Byron, and that those who have the greatest abilities have the greatest misfortunes, — because they have, more than others, mortifications and disappointments.”

There is something in that view of the case undoubtedly. The world really did care little to be amused as her son was amusing it, and would seem to have been quite willing to go on as before. Nevertheless the power to amuse or amend the world carries with it a necessity to make the trial ; the Byrons and the Landors are not able

\* *Ante*, p. 37. I take the opportunity of desiring the reader to substitute “fourteen miles” for “a mile and a half” in the passage here referred to, the former, and not the latter, being the distance of Studley Castle from Warwick.

to be mute, whatever the penalties of speech may be ; the mothers who bore them are for this as responsible as themselves ; and the excellent old lady at Ipsley Court would probably have been startled to know to what extent her own solid, genuine, and noble nature had but found another kind of utterance in the genius of her son. With less in herself of the substance of which the Conversations were made, she would have been readier to applaud them.

In the November of that year she formally proposed to Landor what before she had hinted to him, that she should be permitted to receive and educate Arnold in England.\* She did not like, she said, either Italian or French education. She should wish him to have an English education, and to know the country his forefathers were brought up in. Landor is grateful, but cannot consent yet. Arnold would not be seven years old until March ; for the present he did not think he could live a single month without him ; and he describes the schoolmistress he goes to now, saying it is not their intention to send him ever to any school in Italy from which he cannot daily return to his home, for he means himself to teach him Latin and Greek in the spring ; but the time will come for England, and for the garden his grandmother has promised him. "He is as fond of it as I was at his age. If ever he goes to any public school it shall be Eton, and that five or six years hence, for about three years." Alas, the time never came. No year passed while the boy's grandmother lived in which the offer was not renewed. But if the opportunity for doing what is right is not taken in the day, the morrow for doing it never comes. In a letter to his sister Ellen two months later, Landor deplores his inability to have done what was right in that case. But he had refused an invitation to Rome the previous year, because he could not bring himself to leave Arnold. "In fact, I do not ever wish to be a day without any one of them while they are children. They are different creatures when they grow up." It might be a good reason, but it was not an unselfish one, and was the source of unutterable misery.

The letter of his sister to which he so replied, besides telling him all they meant to have done to make Arnold happy, had been full of pleasant talk of the wonderful things they were hearing about the *Conversations*, and had mentioned an omission which touched Landor nearly. "I could not resist telling you," she wrote, "a wish that many have expressed that Doctor Parr might not be forgotten. Learned men have desired it, not ignorant women like me. The Doctor himself has grieved for the omission. He said to Charles last

\* He was now six years old, and had pleased her by writing her a letter with his own hand, which she answered thus :—

"My dear Grandson, — I am much obliged to you for your letter, and shall be glad to see you here next spring. If you are fond of a garden, you will be much pleased with mine, for it is full of beautiful flowers in the summer; and you may have a little garden of your own that you may plant as you like. And I think you will like to come and see your uncles and aunts. My love to your brothers and sister. Believe me, dear grandson, your affectionate, E. LANDOR."



week, 'How is Walter? I hope he is well. O, he has shown a mighty mind, — a mighty mind.'” The kind old man was then in failing health ; and the eager letter of remembrance Landor straightway sent, reached him only on his death-bed. It enclosed a copy of what the writer afterwards printed as a preface to the fourth volume of the *Conversations*, in which he said that his first literary exercises were made under the eye and guidance of his venerable friend, corrected by his admonition, and animated by his applause ; that his house, his library, his heart, had been always open to him ; and that among his few friendships, of which partly by fortune and partly by choice he had certainly had fewer than any man, he should remember Parr's to the last hour of his existence with tender gratitude. “ My admiration of some others I have expressed in the few words preceding each volume ; my esteem and love of yourself I have expressed in still fewer ; but with such feelings as that man's are who has shaken hands with the friends that followed him to the shore, and who sees from the vessel one separate from the rest, one whom he can never meet again. May you enjoy yet for some years, my dear friend, all that can be enjoyed of life. I am myself heartily sated of it.” The letter was written from Florence on the 5th. of February ; Parr died on the 6th of March ; and Landor heard of the death from his mother on the 19th of April, in a letter shrewdly wondering how the doctor, in a world of which he complained so much, should have managed to acquire so many of the good things of it as to be able to leave his married daughter thirty thousand pounds, his other daughter ten thousand, sundry sums to other people, and four thousand pounds, besides three hundred a year, to the second Mrs. Parr.

In the same letter she sends him messages from a Roman Catholic lady (Mrs. Willoughby) who remembered him “ at school at little Treherne's at Knowle,”\* and who thought him likely to prove a very proud father, although she did also recollect that the only shade in his character was a “ want of patience.” A couple of months later she tells him of a cold she has caught, and her daughter Ellen adds that this was because she would persist in sleeping with both her windows open (she was now eighty-two) ; mentioning also in the postscript the disastrous end of his old Trinity College acquaintance, Mr. Kett.† His mother's next letters, at the end of 1825, told him further about the visitors that crowded to “ this new place ” (Leamington), driving the gentry away from Warwick ; and that the principal amusements then going on in the older and more respectable city appeared to be lion-fighting and the baiting of dogs, for which one of the aldermen had patriotically thrown open his park on the Hatton road. In 1826 the first of his letters from home is begun by his sister Ellen, who, having occasion to speak of Llanthony, reminds him of the happy weeks that she and her mother and Elizabeth had passed there, and of the delightful walks they had taken over those

\* See *ante*, p. 7.

† *Ante*, pp. 29, 35, 36, 220.

beautiful hills and through that peaceful valley. "I wish your son may like it, and live there, and become an Englishman." To this, however, the old lady puts a characteristic closing page. After telling him that Dr. John Johnstone was going to write Dr. Parr's life, and that she thought it might have been better to get somebody to write it who was accustomed to write something else besides prescriptions, she hopes he *will* settle his son in England ; but she would like to see him at Ipsley or in Staffordshire, rather than among those Welsh who had made everything so uncomfortable.

There is a story that Landor, six years after this date, when paying his first visit to England since his exile, gave unconsciously a rather striking practical comment on this remark of his mother's. He had come with his cousin and agent to a very beautiful spot on the banks of the Trent called Carwardine Spring, when he stood suddenly wrapt in admiration, crying out excitedly, "Why the deuce did not I buy this place and build my house here, instead of at that confounded Llanthony?" "Rather," said his relation, quietly, "why did you *sell* this place, which had been in your family for centuries?" It was a portion of his father's land in Staffordshire obtained by intermarriage with the old family of the Nobles, and Landor had sold it to Lord Uxbridge with a rich wood still called Noble's Ruff, when making up the purchase-money for Llanthony.

Landor's last letter in 1825 had amused his mother not a little. He had told her that, there in Florence, he had not more than two or three friends, a manageable number ; but that there were some dozens who called upon him, and whom he could not receive. One Mr. Hogg, however, a friend of Dr. Lambe's, had come to him lately and been very welcome. It was Mr. Jefferson Hogg, Shelley's friend and fellow-collegian, who began the poet's biography a few years ago and was stopped for plain-speaking. "A Mr. Hare, a very learned man, was sitting with me one morning when Mr. Hogg sent in his card with Dr. Lambe's name also on it. I showed it to Hare, and told him I now thought myself *La Fontaine*, with all the better company of the beasts about me. He was delighted." His mother seems to have been delighted too, for she told him, in reply, that she knew how he would laugh himself when he said that to his friend, and she spoke of the election for Parliament going on at the time in Warwick as if it had brought up not the better but the very worst company of beasts about *them*.

In the same letter she told him that she was still able to drive out in her pony-carriage, and that if she went again to Ipsley in the summer she would send him many fruit-seeds, slips, and cuttings for his garden. Landor meanwhile had written again both to her and to Ellen, sending through the latter his thanks to Elizabeth for her intended present of poor Parr's portrait, which yet he was afraid would make him "melancholic"; that being sometimes much his disposition. To relieve it, and improve his wife's health, he had



taken a country-house for three years, of which two months only were expired. (This was the villa Castiglione, two miles out of Florence.) He meant to pass his life on the Continent, having met with so many acts of injustice and unkindness in England. Eleven years had domesticated him; and the children might live together after his death. "I wish Julia would consent to live entirely in the country, but she cannot exist without some company in the evening, — one or two, old or young. For my part I could live, and even enjoy life, if I never were to see any other face than those of my children."

To his mother, writing on the 8th of February, 1826, he described a visit he was then making at Rome. So cold had the winter been in Florence that only his previous acceptance of his friend Hare's offer to give him a place in his carriage for this journey would have tempted him from home. The change of air however had done him good, but all the wonders of the eternal city did not console him for the absence of Arnold and Julia; and though he had promised to remain there three weeks, he should return within the fortnight. He had many friends with carriages in Rome, and did long distances: certainly it was the finest city in the world: never in ancient times were two such buildings as the Vatican and St. Peter's. It was the only place in the world, too, where he had himself ever met with very great attention. Both natives and English treated him magnificently, and every evening he met the most splendid society. But this only made him melancholy: for he thought incessantly of Arnold, whom he had never before been twelve hours without seeing, and of the Greek he was learning, many sentences of which he was able to speak correctly. To which it may not be inappropriate to add that I found carefully treasured among his papers, and indorsed, "Arnold's first letter to me and my reply," what follows: the little boy's round text being in letters half an inch long.

"My dearest Papa, — I hope you are well. We have had all bad colds. But thank God we are now quite well again. Walter, Charles, and Julia send you a thousand kisses. And I send you ten thousand, and I wish you to come back again with all my heart. And believe me, my dearest papa, your affectionate son, A. S. LANDOR." "January 31, 1826. My dearest Arnold, — I received your letter to-day much too late to answer it by the post; but you will see that I was thinking of you and of Julia yesterday by the verses I send you on the other side. I am very much pleased to observe that you write better than I do; and, if you continue to read the Greek nouns, you will very soon know more Greek, unless I begin again to study it every day. When I was a little boy I did not let any one get before me; and you seem as if you would do the same. I promised you a Greek book, but I will give you two if you go on well, and next year two others, very beautiful and entertaining. I shall never be quite happy until I see you again and put my cheek upon your head. Tell my sweet Julia that, if I see twenty little girls, I will not romp with any of them before I romp with her; and kiss your two dear brothers for me. You must always

love them as much as I love you, and you must teach them how to be good boys, which I cannot do so well as you can. God preserve and bless you, my own Arnold. My heart beats as if it would fly to you, my own fierce creature. We shall very soon meet. Love your BABBO."

The "verses on the other side" were those to his "little household gods," written the day before his letter (his birthday); and differing only from the poem as printed, in the stanza that tells of the marvellous tales he will relate to sister and brother on his return:—

"Severing the bridge behind, how Clelia  
Saved the whole host to fight again,  
And, loftier virtue! how Cornelia  
Lived when her two brave sons were slain."

Later in this year there is much in Landor's letters to his mother of the gayeties in Florence, of Lord and Lady Normanby's private theatricals, of the Duchess of Hamilton's parties, and of the enjoyment all these had given to his children. In December, noticing her mention of a visit of his sisters to Swansea, following her usual adjuration to him to return to live again among them, he says that the streak of black along that most beautiful coast in the universe had never succeeded in rendering him quite indifferent to Swansea. How beautiful did he think the sea-shore covered with low roses,\* yellow snapdragons, and thousands of other plants, nineteen years ago.

"Two years afterwards the detestable tramroad was made along it. Would to God there was no trade upon earth! Besides, before this, thousands of small vessels covered the bay, laden with lime, and whatever else is now carried with those train wagons. The Gulf of Salerno, I hear, is much finer than Naples; but give me Swansea for scenery and climate. I prefer good apples to bad peaches. If ever it should be my fortune, which I cannot expect and do not much hope, to return as you wish to England, I pass the remainder of my days in the neighborhood of Swansea,—between that place and the Mumbles. Nothing but the education and settlement of my children would make me at all desirous of seeing England again."

He adds that Lord Guildford had given him a very pressing invitation to the Ionian Islands, but he did not think he should ever move farther than a morning's walk from the table where he was writing. All this however his mother treats only as the whim of the hour, and she still steadily and perseveringly keeps before him the necessity, for his children's sake, that a limit should be put to his exile. Replying to these again in his birthday letter in 1827, he says that certainly they lost some comforts out there in Florence, but they had many others instead. And he, for his part, was perfectly reconciled to his destiny of living the remainder of his days on the Continent, perhaps altogether in Tuscany. But she must continue to send him (what she had threatened to discontinue) all the Warwickshire news, for the changes interested him. In four months he should have completed the thirteenth year of his absence from England; his hair was

\* See *ante*, p. 47.



growing white ; and many who were children when he was in the county must now have children of their own. He ends the letter by telling her of a recent unfavorable season in Italy as bad as any in England of which she had ever complained. For two entire months they had only had eight fine days ; frost and snow had been incessant ; and the English for some weeks had been skating round the water that enclosed the city walls.

“Yours is not the only white head in the family,” wrote his sister Elizabeth in answer. “Charles’s hair altered completely in about six months, so that when he came here last winter my mother admired it, and wondered to see it become just the same as when he was a boy : a beautiful flaxen head, she called it : almost every hair is white, and as frizzy and abundant as ever.” She tells him also of other people changing, such as his nephew Charles, who, though not yet fifteen, was as tall as his father ; and of some people quite unchangeable, such as he knew his old friend Dr. Lambe to be, who had not altered the least in the world ; and their mother, who seemed indeed smaller than ever, but was very nimble, and “altogether wonderful, as her writing perfectly without glasses at eighty-four proves.” In July of the following year the same sister announces to him the deaths, within a few weeks of each other, of two sisters of their mother, the three numbering at that time among them exactly 250 years ; and adds, what will not surprise any one who has observed as a rule how death is regarded by the extremely old, that her mother had been far less affected than she expected her to have been by this event.

The last tidings of Landor himself having been that he did not think it likely he should again move farther than a morning’s walk from the table where he was writing, of course his Warwick friends were prepared to hear any day that Florence no longer contained him. Early in August his sister Ellen, writing to introduce to him a clever portrait-painter and his wife, was told in his reply that he had gone upon a pressing invitation to Naples ; but that Mr. Middleton would find him, on the 27th of that month, again “at villa del marchese Castiglione, called Poggio alle Male, two miles from Florence, out of the porto San Niccolò.” He would gladly show him the curiosities of Florence ; his wife was always at home in the evening ; and though he had himself been in the habit, when living in the city, of going to the Blessingtons’ from eight to eleven, he did not go over to them from his villa more than once or twice a week, the distance being three good miles.\* The Blessingtons were friends of recent date, but greatly liked and valued ; and he said always that he remembered no pleasanter time of his life in Italy than the summer evenings passed with them in the casa Pelosi, on its terrace over-

\* The letter has a characteristic postscript in which he says that “as Mr. Middleton may not know what scoundrels the greater part of the Florence innkeepers are, not to say thieves and assassins,” he subjoins the names of three honest ones.

looking the Arno. From Lord Blessington had come the pressing invitation to accompany him in his yacht to Naples; and, he wrote to his sister, as he had never seen Naples and never could see it to such advantage as in the company of a most delightful well-informed man, and as four hundred a year did not afford all the facilities and agréments of forty thousand, she might be assured he was not very reluctant to go. Arnold indeed had not been well, but the fever had now quite left him; and there being strange unaccountable shells to be picked up for him on the shores of Naples, of Elba, of Salerno, and twenty other places, the little fellow had given Babbo leave of absence for twenty-five days. But before his leave expired, Babbo's pleasure had suffered grievous interruption.

He will tell it best himself. Language less characteristic would not do it justice.

"It all began" (letter to his sister Elizabeth, on the 1st of October, 1827) "the day after I left Florence for Naples. Arnold had had a fever a few days before, and I would not go until his physician told me he was convalescent. Not receiving any letter at Naples, I was almost mad, for I fancied his illness had returned. I hesitated between drowning myself and going post back.\* At last I took a place (the only one; for one only is allowed with the postman in what is called the diligence). Meanwhile Lord Blessington told me he would instantly set sail if I wished it, and that I could go quicker by sea. I did so; and we arrived in four days at Leghorn. Here he gave me a note enclosed in a letter to him, informing me that Julia had been in danger of her life, but was now better. I found her quite unable to speak coherently. And unhappily she was in the country. Nevertheless the physician, who sometimes passed the whole day with her, and once slept at the house, never omitted for forty-three days to visit her twice a day, and now by his great care she has reached Florence. I brought her part of the way by means of oxen, on the sledge, and upon two mattresses. To-day the physician will attend her for the last time."

It was a malignant fever, which the youngest child also caught, but recovered in sixteen days, during three of which life had been despaired of; and in that interval the other children owed their safety chiefly to the exertions of Lady Blessington, who had driven over to the villa and brought them into Florence for a time.† These occurrences, Landor added, had turned the rest of his hair white, after taking off what was refractory and would not turn; but, thankful not to have lost one after being so near losing three of his family, they had left him at the last "strength and spirits better than ever."

In the same letter he thanks his sister for Parr's portrait. Parr

\* Let no one imagine that this is too extravagant even for Landor. It runs very nearly parallel with a story told always with much enjoyment by his brother Charles of his having lost his road to a friend's house where a party were waiting dinner for him, and startling a country bumpkin by the peremptory demand that he should either at once show him the way or cut his throat upon the spot.

† I found a letter of warm affection from her among Landor's papers, dated the 29th of August, 1827, which confirms every part of this statement.



had not exactly that expression when they last met, but sixteen years were passed since then ; and he never could have had a high forehead, nor was there ever that distance between the nose and upper lip ; however, it had brought to him the features of his delightful old friend as strongly as if it had represented them more perfectly. With a request made by his other sister, he complies by sending her, on the 18th of the following month, some account of his Neapolitan voyage ; though he doubted if he could say anything new.

“ Every one is in raptures with the Bay of Naples. Those who have not seen it can form no idea of its beauty from anything they have seen elsewhere. The villas of the Neapolitans are upon the roadside everywhere ; and these roads are dustier than any other in the world and noisier. La Cava is of all places one of the most beautiful. It lies in the way to Pæstum. The ruins of the temples here, if ruins they can be called, are magnificent : but Grecian architecture does not turn into ruin so grandly as Gothic. York cathedral a thousand years hence, when the Americans have conquered and devastated the country, will be more striking. The Lucrine Lake is a poor pond, — if poor is that pond which produces the proprietor more than a hundred a year every acre of it, and this chiefly by the *cockles*. Formerly it was remarkable for the flavor of its oysters. Lake Avernus, one would imagine, is terrific. On the contrary it is a pretty little round lake, with groves full of birds all round. I did not see the Island of Capri, which I much regret. Elba I saw on my return : a very beautiful and fertile island, with the best harbor in Italy. I am inclined to think the people in the south of this country better than the Tuscans. I never met with a graver or sounder man than the Count de Camaldoli, who was minister to the King of Naples in the time of the Constitution. For these last six weeks I have seen him most evenings, and conversed with him the greater part of them unless when his daughters sang, which they do divinely.”

Writing at the same date to his elder sister, he tells her that he had just heard the day before that the third, fourth, and fifth volumes of his *Conversations* would be out in two or three months, early in the beginning of the ensuing year certainly. The third had been printed for a year and more, but the publisher had delayed it ; and another publisher had undertaken the fourth and fifth. He was sick of writing. Never would he write anything more. He had burnt all the things he had begun, and many that he had nearly completed. He was now occupied in collecting pictures. He had not seen so much of their artist friend as he wished, because of moving to his new villa ; but never had he seen any one more delighted at their last meeting than Mr. Middleton was at some pictures which he had himself lately acquired in exchange for the drawings by old masters which he bought in Bath eighteen years ago. With more money at command he could have made a fortune by the purchase of pictures in Italy. A man must live on the spot, and visit pictures daily, thoroughly to master the subject. He was but a child at it, yet the dealers thought him knowing. More of this hereafter.

To his mother he writes at a little later date, to express his delight at having heard that Ipsley had brought back her strength,

and to tell her that while she and the rest in England had been overflowed with rain, in Italy they had not had a single shower for above four months. He tells her of sickness among his children, and says that nothing is absurder than to suppose that certain disorders could come only once. In the same country they might never return; but a new climate made a new creature. He had just declined, from inability to leave his children, an invitation from the Blessingtons to visit them in Paris; and in connection with this he answers a question from his mother as to whether the lady was visited by the English. He admits to her that she was not: but in France she enjoyed the first society, receiving only the first; and never had he talked with a woman more elegant or better informed, more generous or high-minded. The close of his letter is addressed to his two sisters; notices to them a remark of his mother's to which he had not replied in writing to her; and is amusingly characteristic. The reader already knows that he was too sanguine in expecting that the concluding series of his *Conversations* would be published at the same time as his third volume. The latter appeared in 1828; but the former was still delayed, for reasons to be presently described.

"My mother has greatly amused me by wishing the very thing that has been done. Southey and Hare have full power to erase whatever they think proper to erase from my *Imaginary Conversations*. At present, as far as I know, they have exerted their authority over only two paragraphs, which they thought *actionable*. As for the rest, they would, as they will tell you, as soon think of cancelling a scene of Shakespeare. Doctor Wade and Doctor Innes would be braver. . . . I wrote long ago to thank Charles for a clever dialogue he sent me between the old king and another. I have lately had a curious anecdote of the old rogue. Lord Camden and Count Munster were deputed to make inquiry into the state of his property, and they found that he had mortgages on the property of almost every prince in Germany, at the time when Pitt brought in a bill to exonerate the civil list. He never forgave Lord Camden for knowing it. Lord C. said so. While there is a king or priest on earth, as poor old Lyttelton said . . . but what poor old Lyttelton said I shall reserve for my next discourse. And now to, &c., &c. I remain, with Julia's love, dear Ellen and Elizabeth, your ever affectionate brother, W. L."

The previous year (1827) had been that in which he made acquaintance with "the kindest and most generous man in existence," Mr. Ablett, of Llanbedr Hall in Denbighshire, the intimacy of whose wife's sister (Mrs. Young) with Mrs. Dashwood, a cousin of the Hares, had led to the fortunate meeting;\* and through Mr. Ablett in the spring of 1829 the Fiesolan villa was bought which will forever be associated with Landor's name. The present was the year

\* I quote from a letter of Landor's to his sister Elizabeth, dated in April of this year. "Some friends of mine, I am told, are going to Leamington: one is Mrs. Dashwood, daughter to the late Dean of St. Asaph, the best man in England. If by chance you should see her, I hope you will make much of her. She is cousin to Francis Hare, my particular friend. I believe a Mrs. Young is with her. This lady is sister to Mrs. Ablett, from whom and her husband I and my family have received a thousand acts of kindness."



(1828) when the celebrated sculptor Gibson made, for Ablett, a bust of Landor, of which copies in marble reached England in this and the year following. It was the year, too, when his sister Arden died, and when from her, and from another friend deceased, some small additions were made to his fortune. His sister Ellen tells him of these; and even her dear brother's wisdom, she says to him in the course of her letter, which she had long thought to be more than mortals are blessed with, appeared to her useless compared with the humble resignation she had witnessed at both death-beds. At the close of her letter she mentions his old friend Mr. Rough,\* who had lately reappeared in the county, as having several times inquired kindly after him, and as having said that the *Conversations* should have produced him a good fortune. This last touch nettled Landor, and he retorted upon his old companion with an odd mixture of dislike and liking.

"The mine of wealth derived from my *Conversations* brought me three hundred and seventy-two pounds, the two editions. One hundred and seventy-two the first, two hundred the second. As to that impostor Rough, I never hear the fellow mentioned without fresh contempt. My friend Sir Charles Wentworth was at school with him, and related to me many anecdotes of his shabbiness and cowardice. However, if he had continued to cultivate poetry instead of those thistles called law, he would have been perhaps the best poet of the age. By the way, you have not read Keats and Shelley; *read them!*"

Some other notices from his family letters of this date may also be worth giving. The title of the poem by his brother Robert was *The Impious Feast*; and it well justified the later and maturer praise it received from him as a poem of very various power, and in the sustained structure of its verse possessing a striking originality.

#### GIBSON'S BUST, AND HIS BROTHER ROBERT'S POEM.

(25th April, 1828. To his sister Elizabeth.)

"Gibson came to me the very day Ackelon brought me Robert's poem, and I give him two sittings, one in the morning, one in the evening. There have been three days, and there will be four more, before he takes the cast in plaster-of-Paris. I am told that Chantry is equal to him in busts, but very inferior in genius. The one is English upon principle, the other Attic. On Sunday I read Robert's preface, which is well written. I shall not begin the poetry till I can give it an undivided attention; which will be when I get into the country, and lie under the vines all day. I hope to begin this mode of life on the 1st of July."

#### PICTURES AND PICTURE-DEALING.

(19th June, 1828. To his sister Ellen.)

"I have laid out nearly £100 in pictures, part of which I sold again for £180, and the better part is left yet. If I had had £3,000 eight years ago,

\* See *ante*, pp. 66, 67, and 86-92.

I could have cleared £12,000 in the two first years. The dealers here know only the Florentine school; and one of them, the best and most honest, often asks my opinion even on this. I have put a few hundred pounds into his pocket. Our friend Mr. Middleton could not be prevailed upon to buy a Raffaele for £500. It is worth £2,000, and will bring it ere-long. He buys Carlo Dolces and gentry of that kidney; but he has also bought a Pietro Perugino, who in my opinion comes immediately after Raffaele and Frate Bartolomeo. I could have had it, if I had had the money, for £15. It is worth about £300. He gave seventy, I think. His picture of Julia is perfect. Arnold is much handsomer than he has made him. His face has the radiance of a young Apollo."

This portrait of his eldest son and daughter by Mr. Middleton was a present he had made to his mother, and it was taken to her by Augustus Hare. She thought it priceless; and until within a day or two of her death, morning and evening, used to salute the two little faces, and wish them good morning and good night.

#### SICKNESS OF THE CHILDREN: CLIMATE OF ITALY.

(12th July 1828. To his sister Elizabeth.)

"It is not unlikely that in another year I may have to remove to the borders of the Rhine, on account of the general badness of the climate in Italy. I should very much regret to leave Florence, where I have several friends, excellent and well-informed men: English you may suppose, for none such are to be found among the natives. The greatest loss after this would be the public library and then the picture-gallery. But the children cannot resist the heat, and I am in danger every summer of losing one or other of them. We have had no rain for two months, and there is no appearance of any. . . . My bust is finished, or rather the mould for it. Never was anything in the world so perfectly like. Gibson is the sculptor, and I doubt whether any modern one excels him."

#### NEWS OF WEATHER AND OF FRIENDS.

(8th December, 1828. To both sisters.)

"I am too economical to write you a letter each, not having the skill of our divines in dividing and sub-dividing the heads, necks, bodies, and extremities of my discourses. Although I am sitting before the fire, I can hardly hold my pen from the excess of cold. We have had ice in the streets for several days. What has happened in England I cannot tell; but I had a letter from Paris dated the 14th of November in which Count d'Orsay tells me that there was snow in the streets six inches deep. Such a season never was known. . . . This morning I met Sir Robert Lawley, who walked with me for half an hour, and made many inquiries about the family. He had taken it ill that I had declined two or three of his invitations to dinner-parties; but I told him I never intended to be at one anywhere all the remainder of my life. . . . My friend Hare [Francis] has married Miss Paul, the daughter of Sir John Paul, and has £20,000 with her. His brother Augustus writes me word that he follows the good example in the summer, and that Lady Jones gives him £400 a year. She is his aunt, and the widow of Sir William. Have you read Southey's *Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*? He has sent it me: it contains the highest eulogy on me I ever received or ever shall."



He tells them, in the same letter, that his bust at Rome was greatly admired, and that Ablett had allowed him to have a copy taken for his wife and another for his mother; to whom his next letter is written, to announce that he is sending it to her. This is his last letter of the year; and in it he urgently entreats her to guard against changes in the weather. On the second of that month he had walked through a bean-field all in flower, and seen yellow and white butterflies upon them; yet on the following day, the third, people were collecting ice for the ice-houses; and though the changeableness of an English climate was nothing in comparison with that of the Italian, where there was sometimes the difference of sixteen degrees between the front of the house and the back, it involved the same kind of danger. The anxiety thus expressed was but too well founded, for the year then about to open was to be the last of his mother's life.

#### IX. NEW SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS.

I now resume the narrative of the *Imaginary Conversations* from the point at which it was left on the publication of the first series. In the notice sent by Julius Hare, in July, 1824, of the critical notices that had appeared of the book, he reported from Taylor that its sale had been considerable but slow, and it was therefore very uncertain how soon it might become necessary to print a second edition. At the earliest it would certainly not be published till June in the following year, so that there would be ample time for all the emendations Landor might deem it advisable to make. Were they, then, to keep back the new dialogues in order to see whether a second edition might be wanted next spring? Or should they print a third volume by itself, which might come out at Christmas? At present the manuscript in hand looked less than its brethren, but he dared say it would find itself considerably enlarged before it could see the light. Landor had seemed so desirous of printing immediately one particular conversation having reference to the grand duke, that Taylor had proposed to him to insert it in his magazine; but feeling some doubts whether this would be approved, Hare had for the present declined the offer.

At the close of the same letter there are uneasy references to the omissions, Hare remarking that the Middleton, if he can "persuade Taylor," shall be inserted in the second edition in its original shape. Most unwillingly had he acceded to any alteration, he added, except as to the two lines Southey consented to erase; "but Taylor was so fixed, that the only way of saving any part of it was by some modification, which was as slight as he would let it be. As so much has come out without offending, he will perhaps not be quite so scrupulous next time." In so speaking to Landor of his publisher, allowance enough was hardly made for its probable effect on Landor's con-

tinued relations with Taylor. He was not the man to suffer patiently such a censorship over his writings, or that his bookseller should be permitted to usurp an authority which such men as Southey and Hare saw no sufficient ground for exerting.\* In circumstances the most favorable, even when sanctioned or committed by Southey, the omissions had been a sore subject with him, and in especial when dictated by considerations wholly personal to himself. "You carried your tenderness too far," he wrote to Southey about a passage left out of the *Puntomichino*, "in suppressing my story of the thirteen lest I should be assassinated. Had I my choice of a death, it should be this, unless I could render some essential service to mankind by any other."

The completion of the third volume to which Hare's letter referred was sent over by Landor to Southey four months after that letter was written. "I have finished," he writes on the 4th November, 1824, "and send herewith for publication the third and last volume; or rather a few supplementary passages to it, for the greater part was finished long ago. I had composed parts, and large ones, for the following: Mahomet and Sergius; Charlemagne and the Pope; Tiberius and Agrippina; Seneca and Epictetus; Ovid and a Gothic poet; Francis the First and Leonardo; the Black Prince and the King of France; Queen Anne and Harley; Alexander and Porus; Sertorius and the Ambassadors of Mithridates; Sextus Pompeius, Octavius, and Antonius; Queen Mary and Philip; Algernon Sydney, Russell, and Lady Rachel; Harrington and Penn;† Charles the Second and Sir Edward Seymour (prototype of Whig roguery); St. Louis and the Sultan of Egypt; Fenelon and Bossuet; Cornelia and Caius Gracchus. This last and the Tiberius would have been better than anything of any kind I have ever done. I shed a great many tears as often as I attempted the Tiberius. He is represented by Suetonius to have seen Agrippina but once after their forced separation and his marriage with Julia, and to have been deeply affected; so that care was taken they never should meet again. I make him grateful to Augustus and Livia, but attributing all his misery to their ambition.‡ Agrippina draws their characters and gives some imaginary conversations. Tiberius betrays gradually his suspicious character, but love predominates. His description of the senate; his hatred of it; his resolution to retire to Caprea, which he describes; his eternal absence from Agrippina, — evident marks of madness on the mention of it. If I had preserved any one scrap of this, I would send it, although it would be good only by its contexture. It appears to me that I should have

\* There is an allusion in his next letter to Southey (11th November, 1824), which shows the feeling at work in his mind respecting Taylor. "In what progress my third volume is I am quite ignorant, not having heard from Julius Hare for several months, and publishers being personages of too high importance to communicate with such humble men as I am."

† Of this there has already been occasion to remark (*ante*, p. 374) that it was certainly written and destroyed.

‡ See *ante*, p. 40.



made a great deal more of Tiberius than I have of Gebir and Count Julian ; but I had done nothing which satisfied me in the part of Agrippina, and might perhaps have been a year before I could become acquainted with her for the purpose." Sufficiently long, that is, to dispense with those helps by way of explanation on points of history and character, which in a dramatic composition the audience (and there must always be an audience for a drama, real or imaginary) can never altogether dispense with : the result of such too consummate form of the dramatic art being, that it meets the other extreme of a complete ignorance of its conditions, and is, for purposes of the stage and as far as any audience is concerned, no art that in the least addresses itself to them.\*

"Cornelia and Caius Gracchus," he continues, "was the other conversation on which I should have exerted all my energy. Hardly anything was done in it. This volume would have been more elaborate and more important than the others, and would have cost me double the time of both. Three are enough : they will raise against me almost every man in England. I have not yet received my copy, but I have made large additions. Whether there will ever be another edition is uncertain however. My heart beats often for your *Colloquies*. I am glad that you have adorned them with some scenery. I do not recollect that I have done anything of the kind except on the entrance to Ashbourne, where Walton is the speaker. I stand agape at myself," he says abruptly, at the close of this letter. "Not only have I dared to introduce Cicero and Demosthenes, Bacon and Hooker, but Shakespeare himself, to whom they are cradled infants. What will you think of me ? Here for the first time I shrink and shudder."

The intention thus expressed being, as we see, to close with a third volume, the subjects enumerated are to show us what was lost by that decision ; and it is curious enough that, though the three volumes expanded ultimately to as much as three times that bulk, only the first, third, and fourth dialogue in the list, admirably chosen as most of the subjects are, ever reappeared ; those three being ultimately sent over for the third volume.† We shall find shortly however that in a fit of temper what he called the fourth volume was flung into the fire, and this may account for the loss. The Shakespeare took ultimately another shape ; and the Queen Mary and Philip, though actually sent over to Hare, was lost on its way to the printer ; but, out of all the rest, of only the three named do we hear again, and as to one of them a letter of seven days' later date gives further curious detail. On the 11th of November he wrote to tell Southey that he had been able after all to accomplish the Tiberius and Agrippina (or, as he now called her, Vipsania) ; and thus he described the achievement. "I have been spending the greater part of

\* See remarks on Count Julian, *ante*, pp. 162, 163.

† Mahomet and Sergius was kept over to the fourth volume.

two months at castel Ruggiero, the villa of the commissary-general here, Buccellato ; and it is here, among the rocks of the torrent Emo, that I found my Vipsania, on the 5th of October. The hand that conducted her to Tiberius felt itself as strong almost as that which led Alcestis to her husband. It has however so shaken me at last that the least thing affects me violently, my ear particularly. The current would have been impassable if I had not thrown in the midst of it the discourses of Augustus and Livia, reported in part by Tiberius and in part by Vipsania." These breaks to the current were nevertheless afterwards removed ;\* and of the dialogue as it then remained, and now stands among the *Conversations*, Julius Hare wrote to Landor, in a letter dated the 24th June, 1826, that he should feel little hesitation in declaring it the greatest English poem since the death of Milton.

For the completion of the third volume Landor now of course waited impatiently, making as little allowance as he usually did for the delays interposed by his own incessant alterations or additions. "Julius Hare assures me," he writes on the 6th of January, 1826, "that the third volume of my *Conversations* will come out at the end of January. He however had not then received two sheets closely written on a conversation between the late Duc de Richelieu and others. I am as heartily glad to clear my table drawer of copies and fragments, as I was the other day to sweep off the stale remedies and sordid accompaniments of a ten days' quinsy." The difference was, that the attacks of composition being of regular and rapid recurrence, the copies and fragments were in continual accumulation. "You had better," wrote Hare soon after the above date, "let us stop the printing off until I ascertain more clearly how far the dialogues I have will extend ; when others, if necessary, may be added."

Thus stood matters at the time of Hazlitt's visit to Italy in that year, and while Leigh Hunt, at the close of the unsettled days of his Italian life which followed the deaths of Shelley and Byron, was still lingering in the neighborhood of Florence. Neither of them appears to have had any great liking for Taylor, and both permitted themselves to speak of him to Landor, and of the profit that such a book as the *Conversations* should have brought its author, in a way that the circumstances did not warrant. With the feeling rankling against Taylor for the censorship he had claimed and exercised, it was as if a match had been put to a barrel of gunpowder ; and explosion followed accordingly.

The ostensible occasion was a letter from Taylor, written in half-playful mood and innocent enough, though with some allusions not

\* The new form of the conversation is thus described in a letter of April, 1825. "Repentance came over me for my violence done to Vipsania, and I wrote a new conversation between her and Tiberius. I could not recollect one sentence of the old, and have omitted the calmer part, the characteristic speeches of the courtiers, &c. After four hours I completed, what does not indeed console me for the first, but a creature of passion and interest."



happily chosen, and an assumption he ought not to have taken for granted. It expressed his regret for the omissions he had caused to be made in one or two of the dialogues, and then said there was another omission for which he owed Landor an apology : the not having placed at his banker's the half-profit of the first edition, which however he might perhaps be excused from doing, as the reprint of the work might possibly alter the face of the account, and leave him creditor. This was assuming that the second edition was to be printed on the same terms as the first, for which, as it afterwards appeared, Hare had not given him authority ; but remembering Landor's tone at the outset, and his haughty professions of indifference to profit, the error was at least a pardonable one, though expressed with amazing want of judgment. Landor at once fired up at it, and his letters fell like a thunderbolt on Taylor and Hare.

The epithets applied to the former need not be repeated. Suffice it that he was forbidden to continue the printing of any part of the new edition of the *Conversations* ; and that in a communication of the same date to Hare (1st April, 1825) Landor enclosed, with further remarks, a copy of what he had written to Taylor. Greatly did he regret that he had had anything to do with so insincere a man. "He knows very well what I hear from Mr. Hazlitt, that those booksellers who engage to take half the profits never take only half the risk ; yet with this uncustomary advantage on his side, and having sold all the copies three months ago, he delays the payment of what is due on the plea that I may hereafter be indebted to him for something not ordered or contemplated by me. What has the reprint to do with what is already printed ? And why should I not receive a farthing now because I may possibly be indebted to him at some future time ? I shall consult Mr. Leigh Hunt and other English authors now at Florence on what is best to do or to say on this business. They know the man."

In a letter to Southey, ten days later, he enters more into detail ; and from this it would seem not only that some letters Taylor should have answered he had left unanswered, but that while Landor undoubtedly himself had sanctioned the printing of the third volume, he did not know that any part of the second edition had gone to press, and it had really been his intention to require previously some new arrangement. "My third volume of the *Conversations*," he wrote, "ought to have been nearly printed ere this, but the, &c., &c., of Taylor will probably be the reason why it never will appear." Then he describes, in very forcible phrase, the, &c., &c., and says it was with astonishment and consternation he had heard, only the other day from Hare, of the printing off of two sheets of the second edition. "It had been my firm resolution to make a very different contract for this ; and above all to stipulate, as he had broken his first engagement, that he should either print all that you and Hare had admitted, or nothing. Principally however I was advised to de-

mand a fixt sum in ready money, as the value of the work was now ascertained and acknowledged, and as he himself had declared his opinion that so much sense had never been put into a book since the time of Bacon. Exaggerated and silly as this opinion of his may be, what must the man himself be to act as he has done ! What have I to do with their booksellers' accounts ? He might print a second edition, and then a third, and then a fourth, and say after all, who knows whether the next edition I print may not leave you in my debt ! But I never intended that he should print a second until I received all the money due to me for the first, nor until he had signed such conditions as I thought proper to stipulate. Hare had no instructions from me, nor any authority whatever to agree on my part." He adds some reasons for suspecting foul play (drawn from the larger number printed of the third volume than had been printed of the first and second) which are unreasonable as the rest of his letter ; reiterates what he had suffered by not receiving what was due to him, of which he had promised a portion for some pictures lately bought ; and then, in language which I preserve for the astounding statement it conveys, but otherwise not to be read with gravity, tells Southey he has made a bonfire of that fourth volume of *Conversations*, the mysterious disappearance of the proposed contents of which has already been remarked. "His first villany in making me disappoint the person with whom I had agreed for the pictures, instigated me to throw my fourth volume, in its imperfect state, into the fire, and has cost me nine tenths of my fame as a writer. His next villany will entail perhaps a chancery suit on my children, — for at its commencement I blow my brains out. Can you conceive the baseness of this fellow ? He addressed to Mina in his own name, with much complimentary phraseology, the books I ordered him to send to that great man ; and has the impudence to send me a copy of his note, and Mina's in reply. By the latter it appears that his gift to Mina produced the thanks of the latter to *him*, and yet that very copy is charged among the rest to my account. Mr. Hazlitt, Mr. Leigh Hunt, Lord Dillon, Mr. Brown, and some other authors of various kinds, have been made acquainted, one from another, with this whole affair ; and they speak of it as a thing unprecedented. I have desired Mr. Hare to offer the copyright (as was recommended to me) to Constable of Edinburgh ; if he refuses it, to Longman. In the latter case you may have more weight with him than the book itself would." Then he describes his having rewritten the Tiberius and Vipsania, and thus concludes : "It is well I did it before Taylor had given me a fresh proof of his intolerable roguery. This cures me forever, if I live, of writing what could be published ; and I will take good care that my son shall not suffer in the same way. Not a line of any kind will I leave behind me. My children shall be carefully warned against literature. To fence, to swim, to speak French, are the most they shall learn."



Southey took every part of this letter with equal gravity. As to its closing lines, he told his friend that the only abiding pleasures, the only permanent satisfactions, this world affords, were to be found in religion and literature ; that he could not give his children an aptitude for either, if they had it not ; but that, trusting to time and providence for the increase, he could prepare the soil and sow the seed. " Give your son as much Greek and Latin as he can learn without making learning a painful task. His place in society will require them. Should he make no use of his knowledge when he grows up, it will do him no harm ; but if he should have will and ability to profit by such knowledge, it will be a grievous misfortune to be without it." Then as to Taylor's conduct, he says that one part of it will bear a good explanation, for that the larger number printed of the third than of the other volumes is what he has himself had experience of, in perfect good faith, with his *History of Brazil* and other books. But that is the only thing he defends. All the other parts of Taylor's conduct had appeared to him as they did to Landor ; but what vexed him was that such a writer should destroy a single line, or forbear writing one, because a bookseller showed himself to be no better than what the spirit of trade made him. " That spirit is a vile one, and it is better to be pillaged by it than possessed. This is my comfort always."

Not so did Hare accept Landor's charges against his friend. He met them in a way that did Taylor justice, and himself much honor ; nor could I have justified my present revival of them, necessary to the purpose of this book as the mention of them was, if I had not been able to accompany them by a refutation so complete. He admits that there had been delays in replying to letters calling for immediate answer, but shows that a portion of this blame had been his own ; and, confirming both what Landor alleged of his having given no express authority to permit Taylor to print a second edition, and what Hazlitt had said of the custom of publishers bearing the whole risk when allowed to share the profits, reminds him as to the latter that the custom had been departed from in Taylor's case not at his but at their instance, and as to the former, gives him the reasonable grounds there were for supposing that an authority, understood if not expressed, did actually exist.\* " The two volumes were printed, and in spite of what Hazlitt did to retard the sale, went off rapidly enough. You sent over materials for a third volume, and additions and corrections for a

\* Hare's letter of July 14th (*ante*, pp. 368, 369, 401) silently assumes such an understanding ; and in a letter of the 22d of March preceding, introducing Captain Shadwell Clerke to Southey, Landor himself had written thus : " I transmit to Taylor by Captain Clerke five other conversations. For, according to Hare, a new edition will probably be required soon. My copies have not arrived yet, but I expect them daily." Sending on this letter to Southey on the 24th of May, the Captain accompanied it by an amiable picture of their common friend. " The eve of Captain Clerke's departure from Florence was passed with the admirable author of the *Imaginary Conversations*, who, in the bosom of a charming family, surrounded by his books and pictures, seems to have realized a little domestic Utopia which no one would be more qualified to appreciate than Mr. Southey."

second edition. When writing to you I spoke of it as likely to be soon called for. I saw nothing in your letters implying any hesitation about it, or any wish to enter into a new compact. On the contrary, you frequently told us that you should have nothing more to send for any of the three volumes; and though I knew your productiveness too well to understand this literally, I drew from it that you were satisfied, and that we might begin printing the three volumes if occasion required." In proof that Taylor had no eagerness to take advantage of his position by hastening the reprint with any notion of profit, Hare states that on making it known there was room in the market for a new edition, he had also said expressly that the Middleton dialogue would prevent his having anything to do with it, and it was only after much correspondence this reluctance had been overcome.\* Lander's information that "another man" might have expected several hundreds for the *Conversations*, Hare disposes of by remarking that it was a belief not shared by the London publishers, or so many would not have refused the book; and the assertion that Taylor desired to evade the payments actually due, is refuted at every point with irresistible evidence. The offence in short is narrowed to the opening admission that there had been improper delays in replying to letters and forwarding accounts: it seemed to Hare that this was the only thing blameworthy in the whole of Taylor's conduct: nor could he for his part visit such a fault very heavily. "I cannot, because I often commit it myself; I cannot, because I remember what you make Cicero say, that 'neither to give nor take offence are surely the two things most delightful in human life.' On the calmest review of the whole matter, it seems to me that I have been three or four times to blame for delaying to write to you, and that Taylor has been so once or twice; but surely there is no villany in this, or I must be a fourfold villain." He then spoke of Lander's complaint that Taylor had crept into Mina's notice under his skirts. The fact was, as Hare believed, that Taylor having been desired to send Mina a copy of the *Conversations*, sent of course a note with them explaining why he sent them; and surely Lander would not blame him for having seized occasion to express in it his admiration for so great a man. Mina acknowledged the receipt in a note to Taylor, who valued it as he ought, but Mina deferred thanking Lander till he could send him a copy of the work he was himself projecting; † and that he did send him this copy was a proof that

\* "This led to a correspondence; I wrote several letters on the subject, one of which entered into all the details, and seemed to me completely to show the futility of his fears; at all events it induced him to give up his objections altogether, and I rejoiced to find that the world contains one person on whom reasoning can produce some effect. As to the story in the *Puntomichino*, I had always wished to keep it: that omission was owing solely to Southey."

† This production was a pamphlet descriptive of his services; and to both the pamphlet and letter of the great Spanish soldier Lander referred in writing to Southey of his book on the Peninsular War in September of this year (1825). "I hope you have been able to obtain some materials from Mina for the latter part of your Peninsu-



Taylor could not, as had been suspected, have sent the *Conversations* as coming from himself. Hare wound up his letter by saying that after Landor's outrageous attack he had felt it his duty to come forward in behalf of his friend; and he declared finally, that so far from Taylor meriting such treatment, Landor, on the contrary, was under considerable obligations to Taylor for the pains and care he had bestowed on the *Conversations*. The letter was dated from Trinity College on the 21st April, 1825.

When it was written Taylor's own reply to the charges had not been received; but Hare, on being made acquainted with them, had immediately written as above acquitting him of blame, and Taylor's letter reached Cambridge the day after Hare's went from that place to Landor. It confirmed Hare's statement on every point; and the money account enclosed with it, for which a check had already been sent to Landor's agent at Rugely, established everything with scrupulous accuracy. He confessed his fault in having left some letters unanswered, but admitted no other. "I detained Mina's book and note in the hope of procuring some safe-conduct for it, so many of our parcels having failed in reaching Mr. Landor. We have now sent it to M. Morsa under cover, as desired.\* Of course, with all

lar History. The summary of his exploits, which he sent to me, contains little more than what I knew already: but I am certain that he has it in his power to throw the clearest light on some most important transactions. Whether the French were the foolisher in the invasion of Spain, or we the baser in permitting it, is indeed a problem. The Rey Netto, I see by the papers, has hanged the only man left in his dominions capable of rendering him any great service. The Italians talk with admiration of Lord Cochrane's meditated services in favor of the Greeks. It remains to be proved whether his anchor can be weighed up from the foot of Modern Faith,—the Christian Faith that devotes herself to the service of her sister the Mahometan. I shall quote, in the *Conversations* I am about to print, your remarks on the conduct of Ferdinand towards his father. The impartiality you have shown to all parties will render the book of the highest value, even to those who cannot estimate the labor of research required for it, nor the purity of its composition. Now, for the first time, I cease to regret that anything could have withdrawn you from poetry."

\* I found Mina's note among Landor's papers, and subjoin an accurate copy of it. The second volume of the *Conversations* had been dedicated to him in language of magnificent eulogy, and this is his acknowledgment.

"Plymouth, 22 de Junio, 1825.

"Muy Señor mio, — Con algun atraso llegó á mis manos la apreciable carta de V. de 1º de abril ultimo, á la que mis padecimientos fisicos (que me obligaron á salir de Londres) no me han permitido contextar hasta ahora.

"Ciertamente ignoraba yo que los dos primeros tomos de la obra, *Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men and Statesmen*, que me presentó Mr. Taylor, fuesen por encargo de V. Tal es la razon de no haber dicho á V. nada sobre el particular, cuando tube el honor de remitirle el pagueño extracto de mi vida. Mas ahora que lo sé, debo dar á V., como lo egecutó, las devidas gracias por la atencion de mandarme su obra; igualmente que se las doy por la honra que me dispensó dedicandome el segundo de dichos tomos, y por las expresiones con que entonces en esa dedicatoria, y despues en su carta, me ha querido V. favorecer, aunque en mí no concurra merito para ellas.

"Aprecio infinito las advertencias que para mi gobierno se sirve V. hacerme, de las que me aprovecharé si llegase el caso; quedando entretanto muy reconocido á esta bondad de V.

"Tengo una gran satisfaccion en asegurar á V. que soy con la mayor sinceridad

"De V. muy atto y obdo servidor,

"FR. ESPOZ Y MINA.

"To Walter Savage Landor, Esqre."

my admiration for Landor's genius, I must decline all future concern with his works ; but I doubt not another publisher will readily now be found. Even the timid firm of Longmans, who once, I believe, published for him, would probably be tempted now." Nor was it the worst part of his letter where he thanked Hare for having defended him even before he could himself be heard. "You have done me, on a trying occasion, the most important service I ever received, and I cannot but henceforth regard you as a friend whose esteem I hope never to forfeit. I ought not to have been afraid, knowing you ; but somehow I never expect any high degree of virtue from my fellow-creatures. This arises perhaps from my never having put it to the test before. I always dreaded making the experiment ; henceforth I shall take a higher standard."

Writing again from Trinity College on Sunday the 24th April, Hare sent this letter to Landor, telling him that he would see from it how much pain he had been giving to a most simple-hearted and amiable man. He would also, Hare trusted, have become convinced how futile had been the grounds of his indignation ; and he would be thankful that his friend had had it in his power not to suffer the wound to rankle, but could instantly soothe and heal it. "You say, in the conversation on the death of the grand-duke, 'Lose nothing, as you hope for heaven, of that which may give you a better opinion of your fellow-creatures, — a just and noble one of God's great work.' The principle is a truly beautiful one, and I rejoice much in having been the means of leading Taylor towards it. O that you yourself would more regularly act according to it, and believe, when you see something that appears not quite right, that it may as often be a mistake as a misdeed !" Beneath all Landor's wild irascibility there was a noble nature. He accepted silently this wise rebuke. Taylor's assumed censorship of his writings remained still a point of offence which Hare had too lightly passed over ; but not another complaint was made by him. Taylor was afterwards spoken of with respect, and in Hare increased confidence was placed. Upon the last letter reaching Landor he gave amusing proof of it. He had been sending meanwhile a succession of instructions, each recalling the last, and Hare thus referred to them in a postscript. "About a new publisher I do not know what to do. As your second letter contradicts the first, your third says you will have nothing to do with either Longman or Constable, and I fear a fourth may come with a new scheme, what am I to do ? After having failed once so egregiously, I do not like trusting anything but your express desire ; and any way the second edition now cannot come out before Christmas." The fourth letter brought the express desire that Hare should act for the best according to his own judgment, and gave him also full authority.

Not until August, 1826, was Hare able to send over a copy of this second edition to Landor in Italy. Writing to his brother Francis in October of that year, he tells him that he had, by Hayter the painter,



sent out the volumes two months before ; that the third volume, though printed, was not yet published ; that this volume was still better than its predecessors ; and that the second edition had been in an equal degree improved and enlarged. Mr. Colburn was the new publisher ; and, for the impression printed of the edition and of the additional volume not yet issued, had paid two hundred pounds. Against the better advice of Julius Hare, however, he had declined to issue the new volume, until the success of the second edition had been ascertained ; and this falling short of his expectations, the other was held over until the beginning of 1828. There is nevertheless no further complaint from Landor. The eagerness of invention has been upon him during all these months, and the delight of giving form to his fancies has sufficed for him. In this the man of genius finds a comfort against many troubles. Dialogue after dialogue had been written in the interval with astonishing ease and enjoyment ; and in a letter to Southey of the 27th September, 1825, there is this characteristic passage : “ Julius Hare having told me that I had sent enough materials for *two more* volumes, I hope to see two more printed by the end of January.” \* The thing was not possible in the most favorable circumstances. As it was, two more Januarys were to pass before even his third volume saw the light ; and for that fourth and fifth another publisher had to be found.

At the end of June, 1826, a few days after the second edition appeared in London, Julius Hare wrote to express his opinion of it, and also of the unpublished third volume. That the second was superior to the first edition was implied in its having nearly 400 pages more, the new parts being always worthy of the old, and often superior to them. Many of the conversations seemed to him to have been very much improved, especially the Porson, the Alexander, the Franklin, the Lasey, the Puntomichino, the Aristotle, and the Chatham, which last was now become worthy of a place among the rest. In the former edition he hardly thought it was. In the Cicero too he had

\* In the same letter he tells Southey what he calls a pleasant anecdote of “ some fellow at Edinburgh ” having admitted into his magazine a silly and indiscriminating eulogy on the *Conversations*, and being ordered some months afterwards to apologize to his readers for having done so. “ In this there is more than Scotch baseness ; more malignity than armed the sycophantic ruffian against Keats. It shall not pass unchastised.” The chastisement he inflicted in his conversation with his Florentine and English visitors by describing the Scotch magazine-men, after rifling him and thanking him, as retaining the pilfer and retracting the thanks ; and by throwing out his famous challenge to the “ sturdiest of the connection,” that he was to take the ten worst out of the seventy conversations, and if he equalled them in ten years he would not only correct in future (under the rose) his English for him, but give him a hot wheaten roll and a pint of brown stout for his breakfast. This, with what he said of Hazlitt, disappeared from the revised dialogues ; but it was not more honorable to him to have praised that masterly writer for criticism more vivid and vigorous than any that had appeared in the century, than for the objection he made to its employment at any time in keeping up literary enmities. He grieved over all such, he said, “ but particularly when they are exercised against the ornaments and glories of our country, against a Wordsworth and a Southey. For it has been my fortune to love in general those men most who have thought most differently from me, on subjects wherein others pardon no discordance.”

found many additions that had delighted him, and above all the exquisite allegory, to which he would pay the highest praise by saying it was the most Platonic passage in the two volumes. Very often also the logical connection was more distinctly brought out, and the whole had certainly acquired more of the tone of conversation. "Still, in the highest merits of composition, in the delineation of character and of passion, and in irony (such irony as I find in the Coleraine and the Bossuet, and at the conclusion of the Peter, the Richelieu, and the Soliman), the third volume is decidedly superior. The Tiberius I should feel little hesitation in declaring the greatest English poem since the death of Milton." In some cases, Hare went on to say, as in the Leopold and the Tooke, he feared Landor would miss the *callida junctura*; and once or twice the insertions had been injurious. The note at the end of the Chatham was more contemptuous as it first stood; and he had felt a good many doubts about the addition to the Anne Boleyn. That to the Jane Grey was perfect. He had thought it impossible to add to it without injury;\* but the addition had even increased its unity, and more fully brought out Jane's pure simplicity. Hare had taken no steps yet toward printing the new conversations. "One should wait, I think, to determine, by the sale of the third volume, what number of copies to print. Have you heard of Southey being returned to Parliament for the borough of Downton? I suppose it is that he may contend the Roman Catholics. In his *Vindiciæ* he has a note on the *Imaginary Conversations*." Since the date of his previous letter Hare had taken orders in the English Church; but he continued still for the present at Trinity College.

At this time Southey had not replied to Landor's letters for some months, and it was not until February, 1827, he explained his silence. A bad accident had deprived him of the benefit he expected from his trip to Holland in 1825; and the shock that awaited him on his return from another visit in 1826, when he lost his youngest daughter, again undid all the good that had been done. It is a melancholy letter he now writes to his old friend, sad even for the cheery way in which he speaks of the old busy projects that are about him still, because it reveals the consciousness that any other life than the life of labor that had so early broken him down has ceased to be possible for him now. Landor's reply is full of grief. The pleasure he looked for and began to receive from Southey's letter had ceased at once, at the first words almost; and never in the whole course of his existence had he been oppressed by a heavier sorrow than he had suffered the whole of that day from what it told him. "The last I heard of you was that you were elected member of Parliament, and that you had declined to take your seat from a want of qualification. What a scandal to the administrators of public affairs, to the country, to the

\* In his paper in the *London Magazine* he had said of it, "Anne Boleyn will be welcomed as their companion by Antigone, Imogen, Ophelia, and Desdemona."



age!" He informs him (the date is March, 1827) of his own visit to Rome in the winter, and of his having remained a whole month, because of many friends he had in the place well acquainted with the sites of the antiquities, and some who were ready to show them to him all day long, Francis Hare in particular. But Florence was a better city to live in, and he doubted if he should ever leave it. Had Southey quite given up his idea of coming into Italy? Might not such a total change of scene be useful both to him and Mrs. Southey? France and Holland had many things in common with England; the face of the country and the feel of the air were the same; but Italy had nothing in common. "We are at the extremity of the Old World; France, with Germany, England, &c., is the middle one." Then he tells Southey that a copy of his second edition has gone to him, that the third volume will soon be on its way, and that he has finished two more volumes, a fourth and a fifth. "Whether they will ever be printed I know not, and never will inquire. This is left with Julius Hare."

There was precisely the same uncertainty a year and a half later, but it had not meanwhile restrained his ardor of composition; and the result was told to Southey in November, 1828. Francis Hare had urged him, he said, letter after letter, to make up the hundred of his conversations. He had thrown away many half-written ones, but at last he had completed the number, and perhaps he had done amiss in admitting any that contained living characters. When Southey should have read the third volume, which at last was issued, and a copy of the sheets of the fourth which would be sent along with it, he was to say whether their contents were, as Julius Hare fancied, better than the two first. He feared himself they might not be. But about the two last being better (what he had sent for one volume having expanded into two) he had no doubt; and very anxious and restless he had been that each duad should excel the preceding. "I have had no letter from Julius Hare since the month of March, but I have received the third volume, and the fourth also, though without the dedication. What progress is made in the fifth and sixth I am quite ignorant."

In that March letter Hare \* had only announced to him the expansion of his fifth volume into two, and had given him little hope of its going to press as yet. But the fourth and fifth were in hand; Mr. Ainsworth was to be the publisher; and infinite had been Hare's troubles in connection with them. The printer had not recently been making much progress, but had promised to resume his former diligence; and the publisher was still objecting strongly to the bulk of the volumes. "One of between 500 and 550 pages makes a very good octavo; if it be larger the expense becomes very heavy, and it

\* At the end of it he announced his brother Francis's approaching marriage, and spoke of the pleasure they all felt "at the prospect of his ceasing to lead the life of a vagrant."

is impossible to make a proportionate augmentation in the price. Now the last calculation, certainly not *over-rated*, gives us 1500 pages for the fourth and fifth volumes, and I think, therefore, you must determine on having a sixth." Still there came fresh disputes as time went on; a full year had interposed before Hare wrote again; he had in the interval been obliged to withdraw the two printed volumes from the publisher who had undertaken them; and it took a good deal of time (Hare wrote at the end of July, 1829) to find a substitute. "The *Conversations* are too classical and substantial for the morbid and frivolous taste of the English public, and few publishers, except my friend Taylor, look beyond the salableness of a work. Duncan has at length agreed on the terms of sharing the profits, if there are any. The sixth volume is not yet gone to a printer, and, as I am going abroad for a couple of months, must wait till October. I would that it were in my power to extend my journey as far as Florence, that our epistolary might be succeeded by a personal acquaintance; but I fear my time will not allow of that, as I must spend some days at Bonn to learn report of Niebuhr's second volume." He and Thirlwall were now engaged in translating that remarkable book; and, two years before, he and his brother Augustus had published anonymously their *Guesses at Truth*.

The weeks were passed at Bonn, but the journey was not extended to Florence, and until Landor's visit to England in 1832 the friends did not see each other. With the publication by Mr. Duncan in 1829 of the volumes above named, Hare's connection with the *Imaginary Conversations* may be said to have ceased. For the sixth volume he failed to find a publisher at his return, and that task somewhat later devolved upon me.

Meanwhile, in a letter of April, 1829, Southey told Landor that the first volume of his unpublished series (the first of the volumes afterwards issued by Mr. Duncan) had been sent to him. Some things in it he wished away, but as to very, very many more Landor would know how truly they must have delighted his old friend; and in especial, he said, Lucullus and Cæsar had thoroughly pleased him as through every line of it one of the most delightful of all. Southey added, in reference to certain passages on Keats and Shelley, in whose marvellous genius and untimely fate Landor had of late become deeply interested by intercourse as well with their writings as with personal friends of both, that he had been deceived concerning Shelley; not as to his genius, which was of a very high order indeed, but as to his character. He had himself believed as long as it was possible that Shelley's errors were only errors of opinion, and that he would ripen into a right-minded man. But now he knew how bitter was the mistake he had made.

It remains only that, as with the first series of the *Conversations*, I should give account of what the second series contained; but, the general character of the work and its mode of treatment having been



sufficiently placed before the reader, the task that now awaits me is easier, and may, with a few prominent exceptions, be briefly dismissed.

#### X. CONTENTS OF THE NEW SERIES.

The three volumes contained only nine more dialogues than were in the first series, but some were of greater length. Eleven of the subjects were taken from modern politics; three were of a personal turn and character; sixteen were illustrations of biography, eight of them relating to English worthies, and the other eight to Italian, French, or German; five might be classed as historical, the speakers being rulers or princes of past times; and there were five Greek and five Roman conversations. I will take them generally in this order.

It was Landor's settled opinion, frequently expressed during his residence in Italy, that the sovereigns of the Continent then reigning were responsible for all the revolutionary tendencies that agitated Europe at the time; and the violent reaction witnessed by him even before his return to England was but the fulfilment of what he had confidently foretold. Prominent among the princes that seemed to him despicable, and for characterizing whom as the most ignorant and gross barbarians that had appeared since the revival of letters he is indeed not harshly to be judged, were the French and Spanish Bourbons, the kings of Spain and Portugal, the rulers of Austria and France, and the Pope (Leo XII.) with his confederates in Italy. In one of the political dialogues the speakers are Don Victor Saez and El Rey Netto; in a second the latter prince reappears with his brother sovereign of Portugal, its title being Don Ferdinand and Don John-Mary Luis; in a third, Miguel and his mother are introduced; and in a fourth we have Leo XII. and his valet Gigi. Throughout them the principal object is to show the inseparable connection of tyranny and superstition with cruelty; of cowardice with religious persecution; and of all with unspeakable silliness. Landor's apology for sometimes putting better talk into his dialogues than his assumed talkers were capable of, will here only apply in a Rabelaisian sense. Not a redeeming grace is given them here, unless in that relish for their own baseness which in the expression of it has a gusto of enjoyment so intense as to amount to genius. Few are the passages extractable from these dialogues that might not shock a reader unprepared for the lengths of infernal malignity and ferocious cruelty which fanaticism of any kind will not scruple to defend under the pretences of religion; and only three or four times does Landor plainly confess to the hidden meanings of satire underlying these repulsive utterances. One is where Victor Saez tells his master that a legitimate king can never have a surer ally than what is called a constitutional minister, because it is the experience of all those gentry that the people are a football to be fed with air, and that the party always sure to be the winner is the one that kicks it farthest. Another is in the information commu-

nicated by Miguel to his mother, on the remark of somebody that the wit of "Don Jorge da Cannin" would immortalize him, that it was no good nowadays people trying to make themselves immortal, for that immortality, his confessor told him, had become so creaky and crazy that he would not be tempted by an annuity upon it at three years' purchase: in short, that true immortality in this world can come only from the Pope, two centuries or so after burial, and when all but his Holiness have forgotten the deeds and existence of the defunct about to be beatified. A third is where Don Ferdinand describes to his royal brother the two principal English ministers, Canning and Castlereagh, as the hot-water and cold-water ducts of the grand vapor-bath by which the Holy Alliance meant to cure all the maladies of nations, the one talking like a liberal while the other is crying down liberality of all kinds, but both in a conspiracy to chouse the people, and snatch the bread out of the mouths of the popular party. And a fourth is where the Pope's valet tells his Holiness that he had heard only a few days before of some one having said that the representative of St. Peter and the monarchs his friends and allies, striving and struggling to throw back the world upon the remains of chaos, reminded him of nothing so much as the little figures round Greek vases, which strained at one thing and stood in one place for ages, and had no more to do in the supporting or moving of the vases than the worms have. Ah! cries Leo, that is not your language. "Not an Italian's, not a Continental's! It breathes the bluff air of England."

Of the political dialogues two more have each a crowned head for its hero, the King of the Sandwich Islands being one, and the King of Ava the other: the object being, in the first, to exhibit the ignorance of a savage who should imagine that court-dresses were an absurdity, or should expect that a title implying a duty carried with it the duty implied; and in the second, to caricature the claims as well as the achievements of royalty in the Western world by showing that what a monarch of Ava cannot but regard as falsehoods incredible and preposterous have been for scores of years in Europe ordinary matter-of-fact occurrences. Two others bring in leading European statesmen. In the one, Villèle and Corbière, displaying between them the condition of contempt to which they have reduced the country they govern, rejoice to have so gagged France that she dares not even talk of the Napoleon for whose glory she had sacrificed so much; and, having nevertheless no alternative but to consent to the recognition of Greece, find it not their least bitter mortification to be thereby obliged to agree with "an idle visionary, an obscure and ignorant writer, who in a work entitled *Imaginary Conversations* had been hired by some low bookseller to vilify all the great men of the present age, to magnify all the philosophers and republicans of the past, and to propose the means of erecting Greece into an independent state." In the other, Pitt has a farewell interview with Canning,



in which his experience of the proper way of serving the state is imparted much after the manner of Swift in advising servants of a lower grade, amounting in the whole, we may say, to three leading suggestions: that he is to speak like an honest man, to act like a dishonest one, and to be perfectly indifferent what he is called. A striking passage on Pitt's poverty occurs in this dialogue; and I cannot pass unnoticed another in which, reassuring his *protégé* against the doubts that beset him, Pitt says he'll find the country going on just as it has gone on. "Bad enough, God knows!" exclaims Canning. "Yes," rejoins Pitt, "but only for the country. People will see that the fields and the cattle, the streets and the inhabitants, look as usual. The houses stand, the chimneys smoke, the pavements hold together; this will make them wonder at your genius in keeping them up, after all the prophecies they have heard about their going down. Men draw their ideas from sight and hearing. They do not know that the ruin of a nation is in its probity, its confidence, its comforts."

The remaining three dialogues, strictly political, had reference to the Greek revolution. In the Photo-Zavellas and Kaido the aspiration of the Greeks for independence, even as early as the beginning of the century, receives affecting illustration; a young chieftain resisting the importunity of his sister that he should not place himself in the power of one of the pashas, and quietly sacrificing life that his countrymen may be undeceived. The same purpose of illustrating Greek nobleness and hardihood is also in the conversation of Odysseus, Tersitza, Acrive, and Trelawney, where, by means of a visit made by an English sympathizer with the existing struggle, Shelley's and Byron's friend, to an outlawed Greek family in their fastness or cavern on Parnassus, their character and aspirations are vividly reproduced, in language picturesque as the mountain scene and eloquent with all its associations. "Nations live and remember," says Odysseus accounting for his countrymen in arms, "when princes have fallen asleep by the side of their fathers, and dynasties have passed away." Finally, in Nicholas and Michel we have the struggle on its political side; the Czar's brother informing him of the position in reference to it taken up by European states, and reporting also views and prophecies respecting it acquired from a travelling Englishman; the Czar himself thinking so highly of these that he is eager to offer to so wise a man the star of a privy councillor and a post on the Caspian; and Michel's comment on the offer giving us plainly to infer who the wise man was. "He informed me that having lately been conversant with Sophocles and Plato, he entertained the best-founded hopes, in case of a maritime war, he should be nominated, on some vacancy, as worthy of bearing his Britannic Majesty's commission of purser to a fire-ship." \*

\* In a preface afterwards cancelled Landor declared that his political dialogues had been the most difficult part of his task, for that "a man does not lose so much breath by raising his hand above his head as by stooping to tie his shoestring"; and to this a

Of the three conversations having a personal interest, the first, between Lord Coleraine, the Rev. Mr. Bloomsbury, and the Rev. Mr. Swan, with much ironical humor contrasted a couple of clergymen of the same church, the one a perfect type of what her liberal and forbearing practice should be, the other a methodistical impostor who forces himself into the sick-room of a racketing, gaming, dissolute Irish lord, by whom before his day of grace he had been plucked at the gaming-table, in the hope to get his money back as a legacy from the dying sinner. The second was in the form of a narrative, comprising several other dialogues besides that from which it took its title of the Duc de Richelieu, Sir Firebrace Cotes, Lady Glengrin, and Mr. Normanby : giving under the latter name some vigorous experiences only slightly disguised from Landor's own ; showing Tom Paine in his lodgings in Paris shortly after Robespierre's fall ; in the notices of Normanby's life including a full-length sketch of his father the village schoolmaster, some persecutions for opinion which even a life so humble could not then escape, and some love adventures in which a very genuine old-world humor alternates with delightful pathos ; describing an Irishman's journey from Florence to Rome ; \* and closing with some sketches of Ireland herself, impartial in their sunshine and their shade. This dialogue was a special favorite with Emerson, and deserved to be : for though travelling far afield, and too often losing connection by the way, it contains passages of mirth as well as sadness in a strain of tender delicacy not always usual with Landor ; and in several places, as where Normanby relates his having called in an auctioneer to sell his father's library, and what the good schoolmaster thought of particular books † is noted side by side with

few lines from a letter to myself may perhaps be worth adding. "Of course the fellows who attack me for personalities in my conversations, and for personalities about creatures perishable and sordid as themselves, never heard of Plato, or have the least notion that that earliest and most celebrated composer of prose dialogue has introduced contemporaries of as worthless and almost as mischievous a character as the worst in mine. Rely upon it that the book which carries about it nothing to mark its own age will rarely be very interesting to another."

\* From its succession of pictures one may be taken. "We slept at Siena. . . . In the morning, instead of vineyards and cornfields, a vast barren country, cracked by the heat, lay wide open before me. It looked like some starved monster, from whose powerless bones one still wishes one's self away. No hedge was there, no tree, nor bird of any kind to inhabit them if there had been. I saw no animal but one long snake, lying in the middle of the road."

† A part of what he said to his son when he gave him Potter's *Æschylus* to read shall be preserved here. "Christopher, I doubt not that Thespis was preferred to him by the graver critics; there was something so unaffected in a cart, and so little of deception in wine-dregs; and yet, Christopher, the *Prometheus* is the grandest poetical conception that ever entered into the heart of man. Homer could no more have written this tragedy than *Æschylus* could have written the *Iliad*. Mind me, I do not compare them. An elephant could not beget a lion, nor a lion an elephant. Critics talk most about the *visible* in sublimity: the Jupiter, the Neptune. Magnitude and power are sublime but in the second degree, managed as they may be. Where the heart is not shaken, the gods thunder and stride in vain. True sublimity is the perfection of the pathetic, which has other sources than pity; generosity for instance, and self-devotion. When the generous and self-devoted man suffers, there comes pity: the basis of the sublime is then above the water, and the poet, with or without the gods, can elevate it above the skies. Terror is but the relic of a childish feeling: pity is not given to children."



what the man of the hammer thought of them, we have things as characteristic as any in the conversations. The grandest old preachers are passed in review. "Lord help us! we have newer things by years and years." When Leighton, Taylor, Barrow, are dwelt upon, maybe, says the auctioneer, maybe; but here is "Doctor Hugh Blair, with his noble cassock and five-guinea wig, close, trim, and hard, as the feathers round an owlet's eye, he outsells them twenty to one." Whereat poor Mr. Normanby has to content himself with a philosophical reflection which Landor found frequently useful in his own case: "Let no writer be solicitous of Fame; she is more uncertain and more blind than Fortune: let them do for the best and be prepared for the worst." But in sayings of individual significance the last of these personal dialogues was the richest of all.

Landor here was principal speaker himself, talking with two visitors at his palazzo, an Englishman and a Florentine, of such divers topics as arise in common conversation, but with a mastery of every subject handled and a precision of style that common talk is stranger to. The date of the dialogue was the time of the death of the reigning grand-duke (son of Leopold) whose virtues receive ungrudging homage, though, in displaying by some touching stories his delicate consideration for the meanest of his subjects, it is thought necessary at the same time to make grim apology for such trifling and idling in a man of his rank at a crisis "when the first princes and opera-dancers in the world were at the congress of Verona fixing the fate of nations." Opinion is also given of the city ruled by Ferdinand, though in terms of less unmixed eulogy than are applied to her ruler; for we are told that they are as stinging as well as honeyed little creatures who inhabit that central hive, not created for the gloom of Dante, but alive and alert in the daylight of Petrarch and Boccaccio. Those opinions of Shelley, too, we find to be here expressed which Southey thought to be less merited by his character than his poetry;\* and with these were joined some remarks on Keats in a spirit of keener appreciation. Ranking him with Burns and Chaucer, not merely for the freshness of his apprehension of objects of common life and external nature, but for what Sidney calls "the elementish and ethereal" parts of poetry, Landor goes deeper in his criticism of Keats than is always his wont; and since the dialogue was written two more generations of readers of poetry have gone far to confirm its judgment, that "time alone was wanting to complete a poet who already surpassed all his contemporaries in this country in the poet's most subtle attributes."† Landor adds how

\* *Ante*, p. 414. Something will have to be said of this hereafter.

† I forbear from preserving now the scathing words directed against the malignity of personal abuse which then disgraced literature, and imbibtered, if it did not actually shorten, the young poet's closing days. But these were followed by a fine remark: "Fame often rests at first upon something accidental; and often too is swept away, or for a time removed: but neither genius nor glory is conferred at once: nor do they glimmer and fall at a shout, like drops in a grotto. Their foundations in the beginning

great was his own regret that it had not been his fortune in Italy to know either of these young men who within so short a space of time had added two more immortal names to the cemeteries of Rome. With Keats the opportunity had not arisen; and from Shelley he had turned away when they both lived in Pisa, because of a story of the tragedy of the poet's first wife told him by Mackintosh. But what he further says in this dialogue of his general avoidance of the society of literary men, from a disinclination to take part in their differences, and to receive displeasure or uneasiness at the recital of their injuries, is within my experience true. Nor less true, as I tested abundantly during my long intimacy with him, is what he remarks upon his English visitor's request that he would repeat verses he had written on Keats and Burns. "I rarely do retain in memory anything of my own, and probably you will never find a man who has heard me repeat a line." Of his writings generally he adds that he is far from certain that in their inferences they are all quite sound; but he believes that they will give such exercise in discussing them as may tend to make other men's healthier. "I have walked always where I must breathe hard, and where such breathing was my luxury: I now sit somewhat stiller, and have fewer aspirations: but I inhale the same atmosphere yet." All the indifference he professed to the good opinion of his contemporaries, I cannot say that he felt; but of the tricks and arts of authorship he had none, and at the least no man had a better title to say that whether his books were read in that age or the next was a matter no more adding to his anxiety or occupying his speculation than whether it should be that morning or the next afternoon.

The subject reappears in perhaps the finest of all the sixteen dialogues I have classed as illustrations of biography, where Newton talks with his old tutor Barrow at Cambridge before going up for his master's degree. Much of this is a comment on Bacon's Essays, which it is not extravagant to say is as good as the essays themselves; much has a personal reference; and every part is suggestive in the highest degree. "Rise, but let no man lift you," is the counsel of the old divine. "The best thing is to stand above the world; the next is, to stand apart from it on any side. . . . Have no intercourse with small authors: cultivate the highest: to reverence and to defend them. . . . Those who have the longest wings have the most difficulty in the first mounting. . . .<sup>\*</sup> Do not be ambitious of an

may be scooped away by the slow machinery of malicious labor; but after a season they increase with every surge that comes against them, and harden at every tempest to which they are exposed." It is to be added, of our own days, that if "malicious labor" now seldom besets the start of the young claimant for the laurel, we seem, on the other hand, to be falling into the as profitless and dangerous habit of conferring genius and glory all at once. The danger now, to the old hands as well as the new beginners, is on the side of excessive praise.

<sup>\*</sup> The theme is pursued in another passage, where the slow recognition of genius is likened to the tardy discovery of the precious metals. "Thus it is with writers who are to have a currency through ages. In the beginning they are confounded with



early fame : such is apt to shrivel and to drop under the tree. . . . Reputation is casual : the wise may long want it, the unwise may soon acquire it, a servant may further it, a spiteful man may obstruct it, a passionate man may maim it, and whole gangs are ready to waylay it as it mounts the hill." Newton having remarked as to some point that he is not quite satisfied : "those who are quite satisfied," rejoins his friend, "sit still and do nothing : those who are not quite satisfied are the benefactors of the world." To another of Newton's misgivings there is also a word of reassurance wisely as well as widely applicable, where Barrow tells him that quickness is among the least of the mind's properties, belonging to her in almost her lowest state, not abandoning her when reason itself has gone, and abounding on the race-course and at the card-table : "education does not give it, and reflection takes away from it." So, where the same speaker calls Newton a great inventor, says it is a silliness to apply the quality of invention in literature mostly or altogether to poetry or romance, and pronounces the imagination of the philosopher to be more wonderful than anything within the range of fiction, — or where, speaking in the same strain of secrets of science, he declares that in every great mind there must be some, for that every deep inquirer has discovered more than he thought it prudent to avow, as almost every shallow one throws out more than he has well discovered, — we have still, in these as in numberless other instances, the sort of sayings all the dialogues are rich in (this one singularly so), sayings that seem to have so wanted to be said that the utterance makes them common property. I have heard Landor humorously complain of the many poachers without license or acknowledgment who thus had sported over the manor of this very conversation, protesting that he could forgive them if in taking his sentences they would take as well the advice contained in them, and declaring with his hearty laugh that never had he put so much wisdom into so few syllables as in the last words of Barrow to Newton. The younger Isaac has asked the elder whether a studious man ought to think of matrimony, and the elder has replied that poets, mathematicians, and painters never should ; but that other studious men might, after reflecting upon it twenty years. Newton thereupon shows himself disposed to give up his mathematics and reflect the twenty years. To which says Barrow : "Begin to reflect on it after the twenty, and continue to reflect on it all the remainder ; I mean at intervals, and quite leisurely. It will save to you many prayers, and may suggest to you one thanksgiving."

Another equally attractive dialogue in the class of which I am speaking was the Penn and Peterborough, founded on that passage of

most others ; soon they fall into some secondary class ; next into one rather less obscure and humble ; by degrees they are liberated from the dross and lumber that hamper them ; and, being once above the heads of contemporaries, rise slowly and waveringly, then regularly and erectly, then rapidly and majestically, till the vision strains and aches as it pursues them in their ethereal elevation."

Spence where the friend of Swift and Pope says he took a trip once with Penn to his colony of Pennsylvania ; introducing the friends as they traverse on horseback the yet untamed forests stretching in the direction of the Pacific, and for its principal themes of talk opening out fields of speculation and inquiry as vast and unreclaimed ; forms and tenets of religion and government, institutions and establishments in their tendencies spiritual or social, and the direction or extent to which new communities should take example from old in the arrangements, usages, and graces of life. The dialogue is a very picturesque as well as powerful one. It would be hard to say which speaker talks the best, and the horses are as good a contrast as the men who ride them. The stout contemplative black mare with her bushy mane and tail, white in one fetlock and hoof and with a broad white streak down her forehead, one feels to be as much the proper animal to carry Penn, as, in the high-bred gelding with his silvery tail and body bright and flashy as a marigold, wide-nostrilled, loud-snorting, and slyly-snapping at his comrade, quick-paced, tricky, and mettlesome, we see the very beast to be bestriden by Peterborough ; and Landor's sympathy being quite as much with Penn's dislike of establishments and liking for republics as with Peterborough's free-thinking and aristocratic tastes, fairer play than usual is shown to both sides in all the arguments. These of course I turn away from here ; having only space remaining for a few pregnant words wherein the mischievous cry that would exclude a Shakespeare or a Milton, supposing them likewise to have received the requisites of fortune, from being ever proposed or thought of for election in any borough where they might happen to be born, because forsooth it is men of business that are wanted, and not men of books or genius, is disposed of by Penn : "As if men of genius are not men of business in the highest sense of the word ; of business in which the State and Society are implicated for ages !"

Of the other six conversations taken from English biography there are four, the Leofric and Godiva, the John of Gaunt and Joanna of Kent, the Lady Lisle and Elizabeth Gaunt, and the Walton, Cotton, and Oldways, which take rank with the Jane Grey and the Anne Boleyn as very exquisite prose-poems. Godiva was a favorite heroine of Landor's ; in his boyhood he used to steal away from Warwick to attend her fairs and festivals ;\* and with consummate delicacy he has treated her in this scene, showing how Leofric's vow was made and her own resolution taken, and what were her timid tender thoughts the night before she rode through the city. The time of the John of Gaunt scene is when the people have risen against his suspected intention of seizing his nephew's crown ; when he is saved only by the interference of the popular idol, his brother's widow, the mother of the child he would have wronged ; and the stronghold which angry missiles had wellnigh shaken down is in almost greater

\* See *ante*, p. 335.



danger of being rent asunder by wild acclamations of joy. "Lancaster!" exclaims Joanna; "what a voice have the People when they speak out! It shakes me with astonishment, almost with consternation, while it establishes the throne; what must it be when it is lifted up in vengeance!" The time chosen in the third scene is when that Elizabeth Gaunt is brought to Lady Lisle's condemned cell whom Penn saw place round her body with her own hands the fagots that were to consume her for the same crime as Lady Lisle's, of having given shelter to one of Monmouth's adherents; but unlike her fellow-martyr in the fact that she had not thereby saved a beloved one who loved her, but only a wretch who had saved himself afterwards from fresh peril by betraying his preserver. Yet there is no feeling in her heart of anger or reproach. Her sole anxiety is that self-reproach should be saved to him, that the taunts of others may not reach him, that the knowledge of her death should be withheld from him. "I saved his life," she says, "an unprofitable and I fear a joyless one; he by God's grace has thrown open to me, earlier than I ever ventured to expect it, the avenue to eternal bliss." The cry raised by Lady Lisle at these words, which at once makes us feel that from both sufferers the bitterness of death has passed away, closes worthily this pathetic little poem. Nor is the fourth, the Walton and Cotton, a less beautiful though a quite different idyl; fresh as a page of Izaak's own writing; a natural country landscape overrun with charming thoughts; and with a sweet soberness in its cheerfulness and sunshine that, as Walton says of the effect upon himself of sights and sounds of nature, makes us readier to live and less unready to die. "We mortals are odd fishes," the old angler adds. "We care not how many see us in choler, when we rave and bluster and make as much noise and bustle as we can; but if the kindest and most generous affection comes across us, we suppress every sign of it, and hide ourselves in nooks and coverts." He is moved to the saying by some early love-pieces of Doctor Donne's, which the old retired tutor whom he and Cotton are visiting, and who in his youth had been Donne's curate, has preserved and exhibits for their admiration.\*

Briefest mention may suffice for the two concluding subjects from English biography, Archbishop Boulter and Philip Savage, and Romilly and Perceval; the one a discourse on Irish grievances and reme-

\* The style of Donne is so happily caught in one of these pieces, not its extravagance only but its genius, that I cannot resist quoting it here. "He must have had an eye on the Psalmist," says the good Oldways in reading it; "for I would not asseverate that he was inspired. Master Walton, in the theological sense of the word; but I do verily believe I discover here a thread of the mantle:—

"She was so beautiful, had God but died  
For her, and none beside,  
Reeling with holy joy from east to west  
Earth would have sunk down blest;  
And, burning with bright zeal, the buoyant Sun  
Cried through his worlds, *Well done!*"

dies, and the other a discussion of English law and lawyers ; this last being also one of the themes taken up by Malesherbes and Rousseau, in the first of the eight dialogues where famous foreigners converse. It is hardly so striking as might have been expected from Landor's knowledge of Rousseau and the startling resemblance between them in points of character, but what is good in Rousseau's part is very good ; as the fretful talk about society and the court, the petulant attack on Montesquieu and Voltaire, and the impassioned eulogy on Joan of Arc. The best things however are said by Malesherbes, who tells his friend that in his politics he cuts down a forest to make a toothpick and cannot make even that out of it, and that his moral questionings and misery are mere self-invited torture. "It is as much at your arbitration on what theme you shall meditate as in what meadow you shall botanize ; and you have as much at your option the choice of your thoughts as of the keys in your harpsichord." Why, if that were true, says Rousseau, who could be unhappy ! "Those," Malesherbes replies, "of whom it is not true." In two others of these dialogues French immortals appear, in glimpses perhaps more characteristic : Montaigne talking with Joseph Scaliger in his lightest, wittiest, least reverent fashion ; and Bossuet, sent by the king to compliment one of his child-mistresses on her elevation to the rank of duchess, listening with a half-mournful, half-smiling gravity to the giddy, vain, wild, gentle, childish, joyous girl, until at last the very danger of the good-hearted sinful little creature moves him to tell the truth to her, and as the courtier drops from him the God rises and speaks. There is hardly a finer thing than this in the whole of the conversations.

Wolfgang and Henry of Melchtal, Beniowski and Aphanasia, Catherine and Daschkoff, and two dialogues of Boccaccio and Petrarch, Chaucer taking part in the second, complete the biographical series. The first reanimates with dramatic intensity and force one of the old Swiss legends of the tyranny overthrown by Tell ; and the way in which the rough quaint humor of the peasantry is brought out in the quiet unpretending homeliness of their resistance to the Austrian, gives a wonderful beauty to the pathos of the closing picture where Melchtal has to lose his eyes for sheltering his beloved son. The second is an incident of Russian story in which a Siberian maiden effects the liberation of a Polish youth, for whose safe custody the Empress Catherine has made her father responsible, and after a struggle, in which love conquers all, flies with him. The third brings upon the scene, with appalling vividness, Catherine herself, who is shown with her maid Daschkoff outside the chamber door within which Orloff and the rest are murdering her husband. The two last are delightful specimens of humor and character, the one showing us Boccaccio visited by Petrarch in his villa at Fiesole, and the other Petrarch pacing the cathedral green at Arezzo with Chaucer and the author of the *Decameron*. The happy adaptation of scene in both



dialogues is perfect, and the design is to reproduce as exactly as possible the respective styles of these three great masters of dramatic narration. Chaucer relates in language of a vigorous simplicity by what adventures Sir Magnus, one of the half-witted Lucys of Charlecote, becomes educated and humanized by the wars in which his social rank compels him to engage ; and, with such bright exactness of local coloring as a Warwickshire Chaucer might have laid on every scene, he astonishes his Italian friends with a Warwickshire knight's ways of life in the middle of the fourteenth century. Petrarch in his turn regales his friends with a story of a stately conceited knight of Gisors, betrayed by the intensity of his selfishness into marrying the loosest impropriety instead of the most strait-laced strictness. While Boccaccio carries off the prize of laughter from both by his tale of the jealous wife, who had put her maid into her own bed and gone to sleep in Jaconetta's on the very night when the husband has proceeded in penitence to his proper place of rest. This would translate into a page of the *Decameron*, and yet is excelled by what Boccaccio had told his friend in the first of the dialogues of Monna Tita Monalda's love-story, where the artlessness of the narrative has a very subtle charm, and impropriety itself partakes of the innocence of the father it confesses to. "Now, Messer Francesco, I must inform you that Father Fontesecco has the heart of flower. It feels nothing, it wants nothing ; it is pure and simple, and full of its own little light. Innocent as a child, as an angel, nothing ever troubled him, but how to devise what he should confess. A confession costs him more trouble to invent than any giornata in my *Decameron* cost me."

Of the five historical dialogues three have their scenes in the East. The Alexander and Priest of Hammon is a grim laugh at the vainglorious pretensions of the conqueror, who, demanding from the priest confirmation of the vulgar belief that not Philip but Jupiter was his father, the deity having found his way to his mother under the form of a serpent, not only receives this sacred testimony, but information, that, other issue of the same intrigue having given him a sister also god-begotten, it is Jove's will that, like the Persian monarchs whose sceptre was become his, brother and sister should marry ; and eagerly following the priest thereupon to the cavern in the temple where his bride is said to be awaiting him, not indeed with all the family comeliness in her face but with a form that is awful and majestic, he finds "a vast panting snake." The Mahomet and Sergius shows the prophet, disgusted with the corruptions of the old religion, consulting the Nestorian monk upon the several points of the new, which he designs to be embodied in his Koran ; and, the object being wholly satirical, the witty side of the father of the faithful is all that is presented to us, not without something of resemblance to Landor himself, notably in his laugh. When he has told Sergius that he means to strengthen the Oriental against the Occidental Church by

permitting priests to marry, and the monk objects on the ground that if the new church bids them have wives of their own she may be likely soon to come to such a pass as to bid them have none *but* their own, which would be "a grievous detriment to the vital interests of the faith," the effect of the saying on the prophet is thus described: "Mahomet, thou art the heartiest laughter under heaven. Prithee let thy beard cover thy throat again. There now! thy turban has fallen behind thee. Art thou in fits? By my soul, I will lay this thong across thy loins, if thou tossest and screamest in such a manner, to the scandal of the monastery." Before he leaves however he has re-established the monk's faith in him. Telling him that under an oath to secrecy he had unfolded to Labid the poet what he intended for the first chapters of his Koran, and that Labid had thereupon cried out that he was a greater poet than himself, "Begone upon thy mission this instant!" exclaims Sergius. "Miracles like others have been performed everywhere; like this, never upon earth. A poet, good or bad, to acknowledge a superior! Methinks I see the pope already in adoration at thy feet, and hear the patriarchs calling thee father. I myself am half a convert. Hie thee homeward: God speed thee!" The Soliman and Mufti exhibits a counsellor of the great sultan giving him reasons why his order to have the Koran translated into the languages of all nations should not be complied with. "O son of Selim! if every man reads, one or two in every province will think." The finest thing in the dialogue is the sudden surging-up at its close of that Eastern passion for pleasure in which all goodness and wisdom are submerged and perish.

The remaining two subjects from history, treated briefly, but both of them in the highest degree dramatic, were William Wallace and Edward the First, in which at the supreme moment of his victory the Scottish conqueror suffers ignominious defeat, in discovering that splendid life is as powerless as hideous death to bend the conquered to his will; and Peter the Great and Alexis, where the son is brought back a captive after his flight to Vienna, and his father, loading him with brutal and coarse reproach, remits him for trial to the senate, and hears afterwards of his death. Despite the too repulsive barbarism of Peter, there is something grand in this dialogue. One sees that the poor youth himself has a consciousness, all the time, that this monster of a father of his has a necessary work in hand for the continuing or perfecting of which the justice and tenderness of his own nature disqualify him; and it is this that breaks his heart, not his father's death-warrant. The philosophy applicable to this part of the subject may be said rather to underlie the dialogue than to be written in it, but it is there; and no one would have relished more keenly than Landor that portion of Carlyle's wonderful book in which the father of Friedrich lives for us again.

The five Greek dialogues were Anacreon and Polycrates, Xenophon and Cyrus the younger, the second conversation of Demosthenes and



Eubulides, Diogenes and Plato, and Epicurus, Leontion, and Terness. The first is a dramatization of one of the most delightful of the narratives of Herodotus, the ring of Polycrates, into which Anacreon, who had been friend to Polycrates before he became tyrant of Samos, is introduced by way of contrast; the poet showing himself the shrewder of the two even in the craft of government, warning the other that tyrants never perish from tyranny but always from folly, and showing him his only safe counsellors. "You, my dear friend, who are a usurper, for which courage, prudence, affability, liberality, are necessary, would surely blush to act no better or more humanely than an hereditary and established king." Lessons of government and religion are conveyed in the talk also of Xenophon and Cyrus; but the disciple of "Socrates the Mage" has hardly on either theme the better of the Persian prince, on whom there seems to have fallen some light from the East prophetic of a wisdom wiser than the Athenian.\* The second conversation of Demosthenes and Eubulides was one of Julius Hare's especial favorites, and justly, for in parts of it the mind of the writer is at its highest elevation. The time is just upon the death of Philip, when all Athens has crowded "buzzing" with the news into her central streets, leaving to the two friends the country and fresh air, and, "what is itself the least tranquil thing in nature, but is the most potent tranquillizer of an excited soul, the sea." To this fine passage I will add that other in which the great orator, disturbed by the levity of his countrymen at a moment when they had need of their steadiest resolve, recalls a former and nobler time. "I have seen the day, Eubulides, when the most august of cities had but one voice within her walls; and when the stranger on entering them stopped at the silence of the gateway, and said, 'Demosthenes is speaking in the assembly of the people.'" I expressed a doubt to Landor once, I remember, whether in both these conversations he had not made the language of Demosthenes too figurative; and he made me a very ingenious reply. He had introduced him in both, he said, talking with a professed rhetorician, and very differently therefore from his usual practice before the Athenian commonalty. When indeed, even here, he had shown him in argument on a matter of fact, a project of policy, or an application of law, he had given him his good sense and had not shorn away a hair from his strength. But all this was very different business from a country walk with an ancient master of scholastic exercises; and might it not fairly be supposed that Demosthenes would be glad enough of that opportunity to change his habit of speaking when in

\* At the close, when Cyrus and Xenophon take their spears for a tiger-hunt, a tigress which a peasant has stumbled on in her lair is thus described, as she lies suckling her cubs: "On perceiving the countryman, she drew up her feet gently, and squared her mouth, and rounded her eyes, slumberous with content; and they looked, he says, like sea-grottos, obscurely green, interminably deep, at once awakening fear and stilling and compressing it. . . . He passed away gently, as if he had seen nothing; and she lay still, panting."

public? On the margin of the dialogue at the time I made a note of the illustration employed by him. "A man who has long been travelling sits down willingly, but lies down more so; for a total change of posture is more grateful to him and more natural than a partial. The man himself is unaltered by it: his dimensions, the girth of his loins, and the breadth of his shoulders are the same." The objection is not altogether met, but we see his sensitive anxiety to be thought to have preserved in these writings what is supposed by many of his critics to have formed no part of their plan. The intrusion of himself into a dialogue, it should be kept in mind, does not necessarily always exclude the rightful speaker. Demosthenes tells Eubulides how he composed his orations, and it is not less true of the old Greek because it happens to be also the way in which Landor composed his conversations. "It is my practice, and ever has been, to walk quite alone. In my walks I collect my arguments, arrange my sentences, and utter them aloud. Eloquence with me can do little else in the city than put on her bracelets, tighten her sandals, and show herself to the people. Her health and vigor and beauty, if she has any, are the fruits of the open fields."\* There are one or two still living in Florence who have frequently met Landor composing his dialogues aloud among the hills at Fiesole.

It is the same when Plato challenges his assailant Diogenes, in the conversation that bears their names, to demonstrate where and in what manner he has made Socrates appear less sagacious and less eloquent than he was; and enjoins him to consider the great difficulty of finding new thoughts and new expressions for those who had more of them than any other men, and of representing them in all the brilliancy of their wit and in all the majesty of their genius. "I do not assert that I have done it; but if I have not, what man has? what man has come so nigh to it? He who could bring without disparagement Socrates, or Solon, or Diogenes through a dialogue, is much nearer in his intellectual powers to them than any other is near to him." Here again it is not the less Plato speaking because it is Landor also, to whom it is difficult not to apply a number of other sayings in this very dialogue; which has otherwise, in the tone adopted as to Plato, the same defect I have indicated in speaking of the Chesterfield and Chatham. The truth is, that Landor's recent study of Plato's writings had been such as to substitute, almost necessarily, small critical objections for a larger and wiser appreciation. He had been so bent, he once told me, upon finding for himself what there was in the famous philosopher, that he went daily for several weeks or months into the Magliabechian library at Florence, and, refreshing his neglected Greek, read the whole of the dialogues in the original from beginning to end. I was no longer surprised at the re-

\* So also in a dialogue about to be named: "I assemble and arrange my thoughts," says Epicurus, "with freedom and with pleasure in the fresh air and open sky; and they are more lively and vigorous and exuberant when I catch them as I walk about and commune with them in silence and seclusion."



sult, though nothing more was said. Nevertheless, there are amazingly fine things put into Plato's mouth. There is one where he accounts for our not seeing the stars at eventide, oftener because there are glimmerings of light than because there are clouds intervening. "Thus many truths escape us from the obscurity we stand in; but many more from that crepuscular state of mind which induceth us to sit down satisfied with our imaginations and unsuspecting of our knowledge." But this sets the wrath of Diogenes in motion all the same. "Keep always to the point, or with an eye upon it," he retorts; "and instead of saying things to make people stare and wonder, say what will withhold them hereafter from wondering and staring. This is philosophy; to make remote things tangible, common things extensively useful, useful things extensively common, and to leave the least necessary for the last." Of the sayings having personal reference, some may be even the more interesting and better worth quoting for the fact that nothing personal was intended by them. As, where the remark occurs that great men too often have greater faults than little men can find room for; where it is said of Aristotle that he makes you learn more than he teaches, and whenever he presents to his readers one full-blown thought there are several buds about it which are to open in the cool of the study; where it is claimed for every great writer that he is a writer of history, let him treat on almost what subject he may, for that he carries with him for thousands of years a portion of his times; and where Diogenes prefigures the fate of all such enlighteners of the earth. "The sun colors the sky most deeply and most diffusely when he hath sunk below the horizon; and they who never said, How beneficently he shines! say at last, How brightly he set!"

Such sayings might be yet more largely added from the last of these Greek dialogues, the *Epicurus*, *Leontion*, and *Ternissa*; the conversation which, upon the whole, I should say, was Landor's supreme favorite, and which contains certainly more of those points of character that constituted the weakness as well as the strength of his own, than any other in the entire series. When *Epicurus* describes as dearest to him "those whose hearts possess the rarest and divinest faculty of retaining or forgetting at option what ought to be forgotten or retained," it cannot but occur to us, after experience thus far of the life set down in these pages, that the faculty has in it also something not divine, and that to forget at option what ought (perhaps) to be remembered is at the least a doubtful Epicurean virtue. The entire subject of the dialogue is the platonic intercourse of the philosopher with two handsome young girls of twenty and sixteen, to whom he shows his newly planted garden two or three miles from Athens, and explains while he practises the precepts of his philosophy. Of the safe applicability of the precepts at every season, my earlier narrative would hardly be a happy illustration; and of the trouble

not inseparable from such charming friends, its closing page will have something to say ; but in this place mention has only to be made of the poetical wealth of the dialogue throughout, of the freshness of its pictures of external nature, of the delicacy of its criticism, of the wonderful beauty of many of its fancies and thoughts. Here is the saying that "the voice comes deepest from the sepulchre, and a great name has its root in the dead body." Here counsel is given to the young to pay a reverence to greatness both in rulers and writers, but to adjust it always by the consideration that the benefits of the one are local and transitory, while those of the other are universal and eternal. And here the philosopher of pleasure vindicates the serene endurance and triumph of philosophy over any weapons that can be brought against her. "There are nations, it is reported, which aim their arrows and javelins at the sun and moon on occasions of eclipse or any other offence ; but I have never heard that the sun and moon abated their course through the heavens for it, or looked more angrily when they issued forth again to shed light on their antagonists. They went onward all the while in their own serenity and clearness, through unobstructed paths, without diminution and without delay ; it was only the little world below that was in darkness."

The five Roman conversations were, Marcellus and Hannibal, Metellus and Marius, Tiberius and Vipsania, Epictetus and Seneca, and Lucullus and Cæsar : the three first named taking high rank in the class which I have set apart as prose-poems. In the first the conqueror of Syracuse lies with his death-wound before Hannibal, whose way it has cleared to Rome ; in the second the tribune Metellus and the centurion Caius Marius meet at the siege of Numantia ; and the third is that meeting after their divorce of Tiberius and Vipsania which can hardly fail to affect the most careless reader with something of the emotion its writer underwent in composing it.\* The eternal protest of every age against the sacrifice of human hearts to state convenience or policy seems to rise with the cry of anguish of the unhappy prince, as he thinks of the contentment and quiet that might have been his "though the palace of Cæsars cracked and split with emperors, while I, sitting in idleness on a cliff of Rhodes, eyed the Sun as he swang his golden censer athwart the heavens, or his image as it overstrode the sea." The Epictetus and Seneca is one of the shorter dialogues, but very striking in its contrasts as well of the character as of the philosophy of the high-bred man of learning and the low-born slave, and enforcing admirable rules of simplicity and naturalness in writing. The most generally interesting of all these Latin dialogues, however, and most deservedly Southey's favorite, was the Lucullus and Cæsar. The period chosen is when estrangement has begun between Cæsar and Pompeius, the former indeed only veiling, under a visit to his friend for the professed object of seeing

\* See *ante*, pp. 402, 403.



his new villa on the Apennines, a very eager purpose of reawakening the old dislike of Lucullus to Pompeius, in the hope of thereby obtaining sanction to his own designs. In this he is baffled. From the conqueror of Mithridates, an old adversary of the extreme republicans, he receives only counsel to be content with his victories and a warning to make no attempt on the republic; experience having taught himself the hollowness of ambition, and luxury extinguished its last vestige in him. Fain would he persuade Cæsar that enough for the immortality he craved was already achieved by him, and that they who now refused him his place would have to yield it hereafter. "No one can measure a great man but upon his bier." Cæsar silently retains his own resolve; moved greatly, but not diverted from it, when Lucullus turns to the infirmities and passions of his own career, and enforces not without self-reproach the lesson they have taught him. "There is enough in us to be divided into two portions; let us keep the upper undisturbed and pure. A part of Olympus itself lies in dreariness and in clouds, variable and stormy; but it is not the highest; there the Gods govern." In the rest of the conversation the friends are merely host and guest; Lucullus enjoying Cæsar's admiration of the completeness of the equipments of his villa, as he is led through its various offices and halls to where its frescos reproduce his victories, and to the chamber where their banquet waits them. Everything that may be supposed to form part of the daily life of the most luxurious of Romans in the last years of the republic is reproduced with a vivid reality. Even the farm, the cows, the lake, the fish-ponds, the Adriatic itself visible from that height of the Apennines, all of them as much adjuncts to the local truth of the scene as the tapestries and pictures in the hall or the marble statues in the library, take their place in the little drama presented to us in this delightful conversation. "What a library is here!" exclaims Cæsar. "Ah, Marcus Tullius! I salute thy image. Why frownest thou upon me? collecting the consular robe and uplifting the right arm, as when Rome stood firm again and Catiline fled before thee."

Such was the new series of Imaginary Conversations, of which it only remains that I should indicate the dates and forms of publication. Twenty of the dialogues were issued as a third volume of the original series, one of them (partly in verse) on Inez de Castro being subsequently withdrawn to form portion of a dramatic poem with that title; and this volume, with a dedication to Bolivar of the date of 1825 and a postscript supplied in 1827, was published by Mr. Colburn in 1828. Fifteen more formed the first volume of a new series, which a second volume of twelve more completed; one of the latter that had Peleus and Thetis for its speakers, in violation of the rule to exclude imaginary people, being afterwards transformed into a scene which is acted in the Epicurus and Leontion; and this "second series," its first volume dedicated in May, 1826, to Sir Robert

Wilson and its second in August, 1826, to Lord Guildford, was published by Mr. Duncan in 1829, the year to which my narrative has arrived.

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I have stated on a former page that what Julius Hare had done for the first and second it devolved on me to do for the third series of the *Imaginary Conversations*; and as, out of these, eighteen had been completed, and eight more were partially written, before Landor left Italy, I will here mention what the subjects of them were.

Five were classical. In two, forming a bright little prose-poem, shaded with touches of character of the utmost delicacy and pathos, Æsop and Rhodope are the speakers. In a third, spoken over the fall of Carthage, and rising to even a grander theme in the immeasurable services of Greece to Rome, the speakers are Scipio and his Greek friends Panætius and Polybius. In the fourth, Pisistratus receives from Solon counsel and commiseration. In the fifth, where Lucius and Timotheus converse, and nearly every sentence is radiant with wisdom or wit, the great Greek satirist warns one of the leaders of the new Christian sect against the errors under which the old Gods had perished.

Fourteen had for their speakers people famous in foreign lands. The East supplied one in Rhadamistus and Zenobia, a brief dialogue of intense passion: to which character belonged also a subject from Spain, Philip the Second and Donna Juana Coelho; one from France, Joan of Orleans and Agnes Sorel; and three from Italy, Tancredi and Constantia, Tasso and Cornelia, Dante with his wife Gemma Donati, and Dante with his angel Beatrice. Galileo visited in his prison by Milton is the subject of a seventh; the eighth, filled also with pleasant memories of Florence and Fiesole, was a dialogue between the painter Fra Filippo Lippi and Pope Eugenius the Fourth; and La Rochefoucault talking to La Fontaine supplied the ninth, both speakers talking so well that one would hardly suspect the writer to have hated the first of these Frenchmen almost as much as he loved the second. The German subjects were three: Melancthon in colloquy with Calvin; and Sandt conversing with Kotzebue on the eve of the commission of his crime, and with Blucher while afterwards in prison waiting his punishment. The thirteenth and fourteenth, Cardinal Legate Albani and the Picture-dealers, and the Emperor of China and his minister, formed portions respectively of two sets of papers, on High and Low Life in Italy, and on the Adventures of a Chinese statesman despatched to Europe for a batch of first-rate professors of Christianity, with whose help his master, profiting by experience of the Jesuits, hopes to sow among his enemies the Tartars divisions and animosities that will destroy them.

The last six were on English themes, all of them dialogues of character, interfused with intense passion in that where Mary of Scotland surrenders herself to Bothwell: and, in the rest, where the English Mary and her sister Elizabeth meet after their brother's death and the proclamation of Lady Jane; where the queen Elizabeth talks, after the massacre of Bartholomew, with Cecil and Anjou and the French Ambassador; where Bishop Shipley says adieu to Franklin after his mission of peace has failed; where Addison meets Steele after the bailiffs have been with him; and where Andrew Marvell after a visit to Milton meets Bishop Parker in Bunhill Row, — showing at their very best Landor's humor and eloquence, his play of wit and fancy. The last has, perhaps more than any, the greatest qualities of his writing consistently sustained, at their highest level and with the fewest drawbacks.



## BOOK SIXTH.

1829-1835. ÆT. 54-60.

### AT FIESOLE.

I. Closing Years in the Palazzo Medici. — II. Mother's Death. — III. Ordered to quit Tuscany. — IV. The Villa Gherardescha. — V. England revisited. — VI. Again in Italy: Old Pictures and new Friends. — VII. Examination of Shakespeare for Deer-stealing. — VIII. Pericles and Aspasia. — IX. Self-banishment from Fiesole.

#### I. CLOSING YEARS IN THE PALAZZO MEDICI.

"FROM France to Italy my steps I bent,  
And pitcht at Arno's side my household tent.  
Six years the Medicæan palace held  
My wandering Lares; then they went afield,  
Where the hewn rocks of Fiesole impend  
O'er Doccia's dell, and fig and olive blend.  
There the twin streams in Affrico unite,  
One dimly seen, the other out of sight,  
But ever playing in his smoothened bed  
Of polisht stone, and willing to be led  
Where clustering vines protect him from the sun,  
Never too grave to smile, too tired to run.  
Here, by the lake, Boccacio's fair brigade  
Beguiled the hours, and tale for tale repaid.  
How happy! O, how happy had I been  
With friends and children in this quiet scene!  
Its quiet was not destined to be mine:  
'T was hard to keep, 't was harder to resign."

So wrote Landor, in a little poem on his homes; but the Medicæan palace had not held his Lares five years when he moved into the country two miles from the Tuscan capital, and interposed the villa Castiglione between his homes in Florence and Fiesole. Here he lived, with a short interval in the winter of '28 and '29 at the casa Giugni, until he found his Fiesolan home. A characteristic incident had closed his intercourse with the living representative of the Medici. "I remember one day," writes Mr. Kirkup, "when he lived in the Medici palace, he wrote to the marquis, and accused him of having seduced away his coachman. The marquis, I should tell you, enjoyed no very good name, and this had exasperated Landor the more. Mrs. Landor was sitting in the drawing-room the day after, where I and some others were, when the marquis came strutting in without removing his hat. But he had scarcely advanced three steps from the door when Landor walked up to him quickly and knocked his hat off, then took him by the arm and turned him out. You

should have heard Landor's shout of laughter at his own anger when it was all over, inextinguishable laughter which none of us could resist. Immediately after he sent the marquis warning by the hands of a policeman, which is reckoned an affront, and quitted his house at the end of the year." This anecdote is also told me in the letter of a family connection who passed some time at the Italian villa,\* and who, after remarking that the frequent outbreaks in Landor of this intensely sensitive pride astounded the Italians more than anything, says truly enough that the secret of it was not the vulgar sense of importance attached to his position as an English gentleman, but the vast ever-present conviction of the infinity of his mental superiority. "The smallest unintentional appearance of slight from a superior in rank would at any moment rouse him into a fury of passion, never thoroughly allayed till its last force had spent itself in an epigram." Such incidents, at the worst never fraught with much gravity, often took even a highly amusing turn, in his earlier years in Italy, from his imperfect acquaintance with the language; and here this letter confirms what was said in a former page. "Though at last he understood it thoroughly, and spoke it with the utmost grammatical correctness and elegance, he acquired it with less facility than might have been expected. Mrs. Landor, without any study, could converse in it with ease and volubility long before her husband. When Southey visited them in Italy, although well acquainted with French and Italian, he showed himself a self-taught linguist, and his hearers were not a little amused at his oddities of pronunciation and speech."

It was in the palazzo Medici that Hazlitt visited Landor in the spring of 1825. "I perfectly remember Hazlitt's being here," writes Mr. Kirkup. "He wished to pay Landor a visit, but was advised not, unless he was well introduced. Armitage Brown, who was Landor's greatest friend here, offered him a letter; but Hazlitt said he would beard the lion in his den, and he walked up to his house one winter's morning in nankeen shorts and white stockings; was made much of by the royal animal; and often returned — at night; for Landor was much out in the day, in all weathers." My Australian correspondent confirms this story on the relation of Mrs. Landor, describing the great critic's garb as "a dress-coat and nankeen trousers half-way up his legs, leaving his stockings well visible over his shoes: but his host," Mr. Wilson Landor adds, "would not know whether he was dressed in black or white. He wore his own clothes, like Dominie Sampson, until they would hardly hold together; and when he visited his sisters at Warwick they used to resort to the expedient practised upon the dominie, and leave new garments for him at his bedside, which he would put on without discovering the change."

\* Mr. Edward Wilson Landor, a cousin of the Landors of Rugeley, now a police-magistrate in Perth (Western Australia), from whom, in September, 1867, when the whole of my first volume had been printed off for more than two months, I received the letter above referred to.



In that there is overcoloring, but the frequent absence of mind could not be exaggerated ; and I remember one such amusing instance of forgetfulness which perhaps originated the story, since it certainly led to the necessity at Warwick of supplying him with other clothes than his own. He had been so much put out at one of his visits by having left the key of his portmanteau behind him, that his sister was hardly surprised to see him, when next he appeared at her house, eagerly flourishing in his hand an uplifted key, at once knowing this to be his comforting assurance to her that any possible repetition of the former trouble had been guarded against. Storms of laughter followed from him as she expressed her satisfaction ; and the last of his successive peals had scarcely subsided, when, inquiry being made for his portmanteau, the fatal discovery presented itself that to bring only a key was more of a disaster than to bring only a portmanteau. On this occasion the portmanteau had been left at Cheltenham.\*

"He was so frequently absorbed in his own reflections," continues his relative, "as to be unconscious of external objects, which indeed seldom much affected him. He would walk about Bath, as between Florence and Fiesole, with his eyes fixed on the ground, taking no heed of the world around him. I have known him to travel from London into Denbighshire and be quite unable to say by which route he had travelled, what towns he had passed by, or whether or not he had come through Birmingham." My own experience also confirms this ; † and some sentences from the same letter may illustrate some former pages‡ which were printed off some months before it reached me. "The extravagant opinion of his own mental pre-eminence was formed early in life, and remained with him in old age. Often as he changed his estimates of contemporaries, according as they rose or fell in his personal regard, this estimate never changed. He looked upon himself as superior to everybody else, and was angry with titles because they disputed his higher title. He was an enthusiastic friend ; and as far as sound, violence, and unmeasured denunciation went, a bitter hater ; but beyond unsparing vituperation, he would not have injured an enemy. He would certainly not have lent a hand to crush him. It was the strong whom he always rushed to attack. With all the violence of his dislikes and likings, he had also the softness and tenderness of the poetic temperament. He was passionately

\* It was in 1843. He wrote to me at the time: "My portmanteau and all my clothes were left behind at Cheltenham, *against all my precautions*. The worst is the loss of much poetry and prose written in the last three months. I am not such a fool as to trouble my head about the clothes, nor wise enough not to trouble it about the pages. However, I never look after a loss a single moment.

'Quod vides perisse, perditum ducas,'

says Catullus and say I."

† And worse. He would find himself at Birmingham when he ought to have been elsewhere. "You will wonder what I had to do at Birmingham!" he wrote to me in the summer of 1844, explaining a hasty letter sent me the previous day with that postmark. "Why! just nothing at all. I should have changed trains at Coventry for Leamington, but the fools never cried out a word about that station."

‡ *Ante*, pp. 298-314.

fond of young children. He was generous to profusion whenever he had the means. He had a warm feeling for all men of literature, and would have nurtured genius in whatever obscure nook found lurking. Self-satisfied under all circumstances, he was without personal ambition or the desire of aggrandizement. His own conception of himself was too elevated to permit of his descending to ordinary meannesses. He neither desired money, beyond what the necessities of the hour demanded, nor rank, nor influence. The men he admired were men of genius and talent, not men of station. He neither observed nor cared whether they came in carriages or afoot; and indeed pushed very nearly to affectation (a weakness he would have repelled with scorn) this indifference to factitious distinctions. He noticed a man's appearance as little as he studied his own."

What is pleasantest here, as well as most material, receives further confirmation in the letters of Mr. Kirkup, and testimonies thus independent of each other will not be thought unimportant. "I first knew him in 1824 through Mr. Armitage Brown, the great friend of Keats, and the most intimate and confidential friend of Landor for many years. Among his associates then, and until he quitted his villa, was an elderly gentleman named Leckie, very jocose and satirical, whom Landor liked as much as his wife disliked him. Another friend was Mr. MacDonnell, well known to all residents here. Another was an old retired painter who had lived in Italy through the war, really an Englishman I believe, but some said an American, and like Leckie a great Voltairian.\* Landor said he was above a hundred, and he must have lived to 117 if that was correct. Two other painter-friends of his were the Wallises, father and son, likewise old residents; the elder of whom he characterized as telling white lies better as well as oftener than any man living. I recollect Landor having a dispute with Wallis about a picture he had bought and as usual christened a Correggio, which ended by his exclaiming, 'The only proof *I* want that it is, is that Wallis should say it is not.' Landor lived economically and dressed very shabbily. He only indulged in buying a number of very ancient pictures which were not esteemed at that time. He told me he had left all his own affairs to the care of his brother (Henry) and his agent, on their promise that they should never send him any account, for he hated the sight of figures. And they kept their word, so that he never knew what he was to have. He was always eccentric. He never would look at a review, and lived without books, or nearly so. His memory was most astonishing, and he used to boast that he could always quote securely from it; but he trusted too much to it sometimes, and made mistakes. His strength was language, Latin and English; and his passion was painting, — another language; but he was not learned in that. As for sciences he knew nothing of them, and made no pretence of caring for them. He used to turn my experiments in spiritualism to a joke,

\* See *ante*, p. 7.



and never thought it worth while to examine it. One day, talking against the church establishment in Ireland, Leckie called it tyranny and plunder, and said that every man should pay for his own humbug. 'To be sure,' put in Landor; 'and Roman Catholic priests might then be able to take to wearing stockings like Protestants, and then they'd all start fair.' He was fond of his children to excess at this time. I had a study in my room, which I made at Parma from Correggio: it was the profile of the angel in the famous picture of St. Jerome for which Louis Dixhuit vainly tempted Marie Louise, in her sorest poverty, by the offer of a million francs to allow it to remain in the Louvre; and this angel, Landor thought so like his Arnold in those days of his boyhood, that I made a drawing of the little fellow in the same view, and gave it to his father. He was delighted; and with his usual generosity sent me a little noble landscape by Salvator, which I shall always value, and which now hangs in my studio over Shelley's bed. As I have said, Landor often was shabbily dressed, and I have known servants offend him by taking him for a beggar or poor devil. He had the reputation of being a violent man, and no doubt was so. But I never saw anything but the greatest gentleness and courtesy in him, especially to women. He was chivalresque of the old school. At Lord Dillon's in Florence we used to meet often, and there we together made the acquaintance of Lamartine. Landor was much attached to Lord Dillon, in spite of his being a poet; for he was always reciting, and people laughed at him. Not so Landor. He showed the most courteous attention; and often gave him a word of advice, so gently as never to offend him. He used to say that Lord Dillon's smiling handsome fair face was like a ray of sunshine in Florence."

Writing more than forty years ago of the time which happily is thus with Mr. Kirkup still a living memory, Leigh Hunt has left us his description also of some of the Landor circle. In Mr. Brown, the friend of Keats, whom he first visited while he occupied a little convent by Fiesole, he found an amount of joviality that might have represented the entire body corporate of the former pious possessors of his abode; in Mr. Kirkup he discovered a man unequalled for generousities, and for delicacy in showing them; and in Lord Dillon he saw the ideal of a romantic Irish lord, with much depth of understanding as well as humanity of knowledge, and with an exuberance of temperament more than national. Perhaps it was this latter characteristic that Hazlitt more bluntly described to Captain Medwin, when telling him afterwards of the civilities of Landor and his friends at Florence, and among them of a dinner at Lord Dillon's. "It was the first time I had dined with a lord; and by gad, sir, he had all the talk to himself. He never waited for an answer. He talks as much as Coleridge; only he does n't pump it out."

Something of Hazlitt's own talk at Landor's table is among the passages of Mr. Kirkup's letter I have some hesitation in using; but

as the details of his Scotch divorce, including the surprising diaries of the first Mrs. Hazlitt, have lately been published with family authority,\* there will perhaps be no harm in saying that as Hazlitt's present Continental journey was in the nature of a holiday wedding-trip with his second wife, whose small independence had enabled him to give himself that unusual enjoyment, he appears to have had no scruple in dilating to his friends on those facilities of Scottish law which had opened to him such advantages. "He related to Landor, Brown, and myself one day the history of his own divorce. He told us that he and his wife, having always some quarrel going on, determined at last, from incompatibility of temper, to get separated. So, to save Mrs. H.'s honor, and have all their proceedings legal, they went to work in this way. They took the steam-boat to Leith, provided themselves each with good law advice, and continued on the most friendly terms in Edinburgh till everything was ready; when Hazlitt described himself calling in from the streets a not very respectable female confederate, and, for form's sake, putting her in his bed, and lying down beside her. 'Well, sir,' said Hazlitt, turning more particularly to Landor, who had by this time thrown out signs of the most lively interest, 'down I lay, and the folding-doors opened, and in walked Mrs. H. accompanied by two gentlemen. She turned to them, and said: Gentlemen, do you know who that person is in that bed along with that woman? Yes, madam, they politely replied, 't is Mr. William Hazlitt. On which, sir, she made a courtesy, and they went out of the room, and left me and my companion *in statu quo*. She and her witnesses then accused me of adultery, sir, and obtained a divorce against me, which, by gad, sir, was a benefit to both.'" Mr. Kirkup takes occasion to add, that as he and Brown were never married, they could hardly be expected to listen during the progress of this tale of wonder with the eager anxiety, or to hail its conclusion with the irrepressible delight, evinced by Landor; but they were all not a little surprised, and till then quite ignorant that such beneficial uses were to be made of the law.

Landor himself too, in a letter to me nearly fourteen years ago,† described another piece of talk of Hazlitt's on the first evening of their meeting in Italy, by which he was startled a little. They fell first upon the subject of poetry; and Landor, expressing much admiration of Wordsworth, said he had a strong desire to see him. "Well,

\* See *Memoirs of William Hazlitt*, by W. Carew Hazlitt, Vol. II. pp. 21 - 65.

† He was reading De Quincey's *Recollections* at the time (23d Oct., 1854): "De Quincey gives a description of Wordsworth's figure and physiognomy. He represents him in youth as like Milton. I cannot but laugh over my paper on the recollection of Hazlitt, the first evening he visited me at Florence." He tells the story in the text, and adds: "And certainly, when I did afterwards see him, I found the physiognomy to be equine. But W. had a very fine forehead: very broad, though somewhat heavy. There are few indications in the forehead, however. I would not say *nulla fides*; but one of the emptiest heads I ever met with was a man's so exactly Erskine, that you might look at both together, and doubt which was which; and I once saw a postilion at La Cava as exactly like Napoleon."



sir," said Hazlitt, "you never saw him, then? But you have seen a horse, I suppose?" Landor smiled, and he went on. "Well, sir, if you have seen a horse, I mean his head, sir, you may say you have seen Wordsworth." It should be added, however, that the poet's face had been a sore subject with Hazlitt ever since his luckless attempt to paint it twenty years before, when Southey had described the result as presenting Wordsworth at the foot of the gallows, deeply affected by his deserved fate, yet determined to die like a man. "Hazlitt in those days," Wordsworth afterwards wrote, "was practising portrait-painting with professional views"; and thus, at one of his first ventures, the ambitious young limner had stumbled on the threshold. The face had something in it, then, above and beyond the power the painter possessed of dealing with it: a severe worn pressure of thought about the temples, a fire in the eye as if more than outward appearances were seen by it, the forehead intensely marked, cheeks furrowed by strong feeling, and an inclination to laughter about the mouth strangely at variance with the solemn look of the rest of the countenance. Of all which there was nothing the critic cared to remember now but his early failure to do justice to any of it; nor could Landor himself have disposed with greater coolness or cleverness of a subject become displeasing to him. There was just enough truth to give humor to his whimsical comparison.

Many were the points of agreement, indeed, between Hazlitt and his host; and so heartily did each enjoy the other's wilfulness and caprice, that a strong personal liking characterized their brief acquaintance.\* Landor wrote to him after he left Florence, and Hazlitt replied from Rome at the beginning of April. He described himself and Mrs. Hazlitt crossing the mountains pretty well, but their journey as rather tedious. Rome had hardly answered his expectations. The ruins did not prevail enough over the modern buildings, which were commonplace things, to satisfy him: but one or two things were "prodigious fine." He had got a pleasant lodging, but found everything very bad and dear. "I have thoughts of going to spend a month at Albano, but am not quite sure. If I do not, I shall return to Florence next week, and proceed to Venice. I should be glad, if I settle at Albano, if you could manage to come over and stop a little. I have done what I was obliged to write for the papers, and am now a leisure man, I hope, for the rest of the summer.† I

\* In his *Recollections of Hazlitt* Mr. Patmore tells us: "Of Landor, Hazlitt entertained a very high opinion, even before the production of his noble work, the *Imaginary Conversations*; . . . but his intimate connection and friendship with Southey . . . seemed to throw a doubt on the sincerity, as well as the stability, of the opinions of both. . . . He was not answerable, he told me, for the whole of the article on Landor in the *Edinburgh Review*, alterations and additions having been made in it after it left his hands. . . . The book was one after his own heart; and some parts of it he considered finer than anything else from a modern pen. . . . Subsequently Hazlitt was formally introduced to Landor at his residence at Florence; and he returned to England with an improved and heightened opinion," &c., &c.

† In another letter (dating from 33 Via Gregoriana) he wrote: "I am much gratified that you are pleased with the *Spirit of the Age*. Somebody ought to like it, for I am

bought a little Florence edition of Petrarch and Dante the other day, and have made out one page." He devotes the rest of his letter to a Latin inscription copied by him from the monument to the Stuarts executed as a commission from the Prince regent by Canova ; \* requests that Landor will "ask Mr. Southey for his opinion on this Jacobite effusion" ; and, sending a kind remembrance to Landor's wife, subscribes himself his much-obliged friend.

Such few notices as thus were accessible of friends and life in Florence it seemed right to interpose before resumption of my narrative, at the opening of the year of the removal to Fiesole ; and I will now only add a note or two from Leigh Hunt's recollection of Landor himself at the time. He found him living among his paintings and hospitalities, in a style of unostentatious elegance very becoming a scholar that could afford it, but with a library the smallness of which surprised Hunt, and "which he must furnish out, when he writes on English subjects, by the help of a rich memory." He had some fine children, Leigh goes on to say, with whom it was his habit to play like a real school-boy ; being as ready to complain of an undue knock as he was to laugh, shout, and scramble himself. His conversation was lively and unaffected, as full of scholarship or otherwise as his friends might desire, and dashed now and then with a little superfluous will and vehemence, when speaking of his likings and dislikes. "His laugh was in peals, and climbing ; he seemed to fetch every fresh one from a higher story." Both his genius and scholarship greatly impressed his visitor. He could really fancy and feel with, as well as read, Ovid and Catullus. He had the veneration for all poetry, ancient or modern, that belonged to a scholar who was himself a poet ; and showed a proper knowledge of Chaucer and of Spenser as well as of Homer. He seemed to Hunt, by his book of Idyls, to have proved himself to be by far the best Latin poet of our country, after Milton ; more in good taste than the incorrectness and diffuseness of Cowley, and not to be lowered by a comparison with the mimic elegances of Addison. "Speaking of the Latin poets of antiquity, I was struck with an observation of his, that Ovid was the best-natured of them all. Horace's perfection that way he doubted. He said that Ovid had a greater range of pleasurable ideas, and was prepared to do justice to everything that came in his way. Ovid was fond of noticing his rivals in wit and genius, and has recorded the names of a great number of his friends ; whereas Horace seems to confine his eulogies to such as were rich or in fashion and well received at court." Upon the whole, what Leigh Hunt had to say of this remarkable man, with whose poetry he had become acquainted but the year

sure there will be plenty to cry out against it. I hope you did not find any sad blunders in the second volume ; but you can hardly suppose the depression of body and mind under which I wrote some of those articles."

\* JACOBO III. JACOBI II. MAGNÆ BRIT. REGIS FILIO, KAROLO EDVARDO, ET HENRICO DECANO PATRUM CARDINALIUM, JACOBI III. FILIIS, REGIÆ STIRPIS STUARDIÆ POSTREMIS, ANNO M.VCCC.XIX. BEATI MORTUI QUI IN DOMINO MORIUNTUR.



before, after reading the book that had made him suddenly famous as "one of our most powerful writers of prose," is to be summed up in a remark already referred to. He had never known any one of such a vehement nature with so great delicacy of imagination; "he is like a stormy mountain-pine that should produce lilies."

## II. MOTHER'S DEATH.

At the opening of 1829 there seemed to be less cause for anxiety as to his mother's health than had been expressed for some preceding years. Her letters had never been more frequent, and seldom more shrewdly or strikingly expressed. On the 7th of January she thanks him for the portrait of his two beautiful children; says how proud she is of what Mr. Southey in one of his books had been saying of her son; tells him of a living she had purchased for his brother Robert near Pershore, "in a pleasant country, and not far from Ipsley"; and adds that her daughters have been reading to her what had pleased her very much out of Bishop Heber's Journal,\* where his name was mentioned, and some of his poetry quoted. On the 19th of March there is a letter from her filled with county news about the Lawleys, and with what was going on at Warwick Castle and at Guy's Cliff; telling how much Sir Robert Lawley had lamented "Walter's unwillingness" to see more of him in Florence, and what handsome things Lord Aston had said of the author of the *Imaginary Conversations*. In May she reports of her grandson Charles that he was in the fifth class at Rugby, and that the new master there was said to have wonderful influence; that the boys worked very hard to gain his approbation; and that flogging and fagging were nearly abolished altogether. This was Arnold. However, the old lady adds, "I hope the boys won't study more than is good for the health of them, and I did not like to hear that the play-ground is deserted." That was her last letter to her son in Florence, though she lived until the October following. She had an illness somewhat suddenly in the spring, from which she never quite rallied; and through the intervening months it is discoverable that she was becoming gradually weaker, though no immediate danger was thought to exist.

Landor continued to write to her as usual. He complained to her in January how much people had beset him with introductions since his *Conversations* appeared, and why it was that the last series was still delayed. However, it would really be out at the end of March; and she would find that he had mentioned his kind old friend Dr. Parr with the regard and gratitude he owed him. He writes to her in June of the pleasantest weather he can remember in Italy, and asks her to tell his sister to send him various fruit-seeds. He tells her a few days later that she was not to be alarmed by anything she

\* Heber says that the vast ruins of old cities in Upper India had brought to his mind the lines of *Gebir* on Masar. *Ante*, p. 58.

heard of his having been expelled from Florence, because he was back again ; and the grand-duke had only laughed when he heard that the real offence had been what he had said in his book of Florentine patriots and Florentine justice, and of one of the Florentine grandees selling his wife's old clothes before she had been dead a fortnight. And at the end of July he informs her of his great misfortune in the death by apoplexy of his friend Lord Blessington at Paris, from his eulogy of whom I will take a few lines.

"When he was Viscount Mountjoy he was very much noticed by the present King, who, in bringing his charges against the Queen, said, 'I hope I shall find in Blessington as warm a friend as I found in Mountjoy.' He replied that he was afraid the prosecution would make the Regent unpopular, and that he never could be the advocate of a measure that might lead to recrimination. We thought differently on many points, particularly on the political abilities and integrity of Canning. But nothing could diminish our mutual esteem." \*

This must have been the last letter his mother received from him. He sent her over his bust by Gibson at the end of August ; but the letter accompanying it was to his sisters. In this he told them to explain to her that it was the gift of his incomparable friend Ablett, whom they were to describe to her as a most religious man, who gave away many thousands a year to persons who had no suspicion from whom it came ; and this was replied to by his sister Ellen, who said the bust had arrived without the slightest injury, that it was beautiful and much admired, and that Lord Aston in particular was delighted with it. She added that they were in the midst of gayeties ; that the Studley Castle people were staying with them ; that they had had a succession of archery meetings ; and that their mother had just returned from Ipsley, "very feeble, but insisting on the gayeties going on." This was on the 8th of September, and is the last glimpse of her, brave and self-denying to the close, which we are permitted to receive. She died in October, within one month of her 86th year.†

\* From one of Lord Blessington's letters, out of many kept by Landor, I take a few lines to show the character of their intercourse, and the subjects that had interest for both. "You will be surprised to hear that Benjamin Constant and two of his party have been at a card-party of his most Christian Majesty. So that I think his most Catholic Majesty will be left in the lurch; and that the Cross will triumph over the Crescent. But everything else political now gives way to the new administrations of England and France. Lord Lansdowne, they say, will be foreign secretary, and Lord Holland privy seal. The bar is not pleased by the appointment of Plunket to the Rolls with a peerage, but he will be a fine make-weight against Eldon in the next debate upon our Irish question. They talk of Lord Mount Charles coming here. I think he will be vice-chamberlain. Sir John Leach will not go to Ireland. He is wrong, for he would do well there, and find excellent claret as well as pretty women, both of which, on dit, his honor has no objection unto. On Tuesday, the 15th, Lord Normanby plays *The Iron Chest*. I do not know yet whether I shall come over for it or not. I love plays so much that I think I shall."

† From a marble monument in Tachbrooke church I take the subjoined, written mainly by Landor himself, but with additional touches by his brother Robert: "Gualternus Landor, Roberto generoso, pio, integerrimo Patre natus: duas uxores duxit: a prima filiam unicam, ab altera filios IV. filias III. suscepit; lepidus, doctus, liberalis, probus, amicis jucundissimus; anno ætatis LXXIII. decessit.—Juxta, prout vivens



"My mother's great kindness to me," Landor wrote on the 12th of November to his sister Elizabeth, "throughout the whole course of her life, made me perpetually think of her with the tenderest love. I thank God that she did not suffer either a painful or a long illness, and that she departed from life quite sensible of the affectionate care she had received from both her daughters. I am not sorry that she left me some token of her regard; but she gave me too many in her lifetime for me to think of taking any now. You and Ellen will retain, for my sake, the urn and the books. I wish to have her little silver seal, in exchange for an Oriental cornelian which you and my brothers gave me, belonging to my father. I have his arms, which is enough. The one I mean is pretty in its setting, and contains the word 'Leitas' in Persian letters. My brother Henry was so kind as to purchase two Venetian paintings, once mine, and to place them at Ipsley. I thanked him at the time, and thank him again; but I am resolved to accept nothing whatever from any of my relatives. If mother's picture was purchased at Llanthony, I would buy it gladly. Pray let me hear about it. I remember it at my grandmother's fifty years ago. Adieu. I am ill disposed for writing more."

### III. ORDERED TO QUIT TUSCANY.

The incident mentioned in one of Landor's last letters to his mother might have seemed a little startling if told of any one else, but in his case made hardly a perceptible difference in his relations to the magistracy and police of Florence, with whom he had generally some quarrel in hand. Three years earlier he had written to Southey that the things said about the Tuscans in his *Conversations*, and principally those in power, being translated with bitter comments by some literary men in Florence whom he could not admit into his house, had greatly exasperated against him the ministers of the grand-duke, whom however he did not know by sight, nor they him; so that it was a matter of perfect indifference to him. The ground of indifference lasted exactly two more years, at the end of which he obtained perforce a personal acquaintance with some of the ministers, having been called before the courts, and threatened to be sent out of Tuscany. And now, another year having intervened, this threat was to be put in force.

*moriensque voluit, composita est uxor ejus Elizabetha, filia Caroli Savagii, conjux, mater, femina pia, optima, vix annos LXXXV. menses XI.*" "Pardon me," wrote Landor in 1856, when he sent me a copy of the inscription as originally drawn up by him, — "pardon me, what I never can pardon in myself, the use of Latin in an Englishman's epitaph, which ought to be written for Englishmen to read. It was urged on me." An English inscription on an adjoining tablet in the same church may also here be given, though it anticipates some events in this memoir. "To the memory of Mary Anne Landor, second daughter of Walter and Elizabeth Landor, who died December 26, 1818, aged 40 years; and of her youngest sister, Ellen Landor, who died July 17, 1838, aged 55 years. Lastly, of Elizabeth Savage Landor, their eldest sister, who died February 24, 1854, aged 77 years."

The circumstances will be best explained by Landor himself, who will not only relate to us the incident but all that came of it. "You will not be surprised to hear," he writes to Southey at the close of July, 1829, "that I was ordered to leave Florence, nor very much more that I disobeyed the order. My plate was stolen by a servant whom I had dismissed, and who left the house before the due time had expired, taking with him the key of the outer door. I applied to the police the next morning, telling them that I thought it my duty, as the offence had been committed under my roof, little as I hoped for restitution or redress. The chief asked me in a most insolent manner, why I presumed to say so. 'The reason, my friend, is this. Your master, the president of the buon governo, last year, when a picture of much greater value than my plate was purloined by a person intrusted with it, said that if I could not live quietly with my neighbors, he would send me out of Tuscany: not knowing, or not caring, that my application was made to the criminal court by order of the commissary himself, to whom I had referred the matter, and who thought it grave enough to send it, without my request or suggestion, before those judges. It is true, they did not find the man guilty; because the witness who consigned the picture refused to give any evidence.' To this the sbirro answered, 'The president of the buon governo does what he sees good.' 'Then, sir, tell him from me that if he does me another such act of injustice, and uses such threats in future, I will drag him by the throat before the grand-duke.' The next morning I had an order from the commissary to attend him. I went; and he read to me an order from the president to be out of Tuscany in three days. 'Tell the president I shall neither be out of Tuscany nor out of Florence in three days; and let him use force if he dares; I will repel it.' I wrote immediately to the grand-duke, showing him the passion and absurdity of this order.\* When I had remained four days, the commissary sent to me again, and told me that, by asking, I might remain ten, fifteen, twenty. I told him I would ask nothing, and would go at my leisure. He then said in confidence, that if I would only say I *wished* to stay, I might; that it was a storm and would blow over. I discovered that all the ministers were outrageous that I applied to the grand-duke and not to them." I may here interpose that Landor's statement on this point is borne out by the letters kept among his papers having reference to the incident; and from which I also find that

\* A translated copy of this letter, dated 15th April, 1829, will be found in the characteristic series of papers on *High and Low Life in Italy* contributed by Landor to a periodical edited by Leigh Hunt; and as I have mentioned these, I will add that in the course of them, where Mr. Tallboys cautions his son as to marriage, there is a remark very profoundly impressive in its meaning and its moral: "Death itself to the reflecting mind is less serious than marriage. The older plant is cut down that the younger may have room to flourish: a few tears drop into the loosened soil, and buds and blossoms spring over it. Death is not even a blow, is not even a pulsation: it is a pause. But marriage unrolls the awful lot of numberless generations. Health, Genius, Honor, are the words inscribed on some: on others are Disease, Fatuity, and Infamy. Edward, may Providence guide you either *in* this state or *from* it!"



actual personal intercession with Corsini, on Landor's behalf but without his knowledge, had been made by Lord Normanby, Sir Robert Lawley, and Mr. St. John. "He called a council, and was himself the only one in my favor. He told his secretary I might return when I would, since it appeared I had gone to the baths of Lucca, and that it was a *mesintelligence* that might have been avoided. This order his ministers kept back. I did not know it was given, and returned without it. The ministers were astonished I returned so soon, and the secretary that I had not returned much sooner. My note on Corsini selling his wife's old clothes before she had been dead a fortnight, that on Borghese, that on our patriots, &c., leave me none but enemies. Such being the case, I resolved to pitch my tent in the midst of them; and have now bought a villa, belonging to the Count Gherardescha, of the family of C. Ugolino, and upon the spot where Boccaccio led his women to bathe when they had left the first scene of their story-telling. Here I shall pass my life; long or short, no matter; but God grant without pain and sickness, and with only such friends and such enemies as I enjoy at present. Pray come and pass the vintage and winter with me, — this year if possible; if not, the next. I will give you a cool and beautiful chapel to write and read in, and shall then be sure that it is consecrated. Bring your son."

This invitation was renewed three months later, Landor having heard meanwhile of his mother's death. Southey had asked him (at the end of August) to discover where Madame Christophe, once queen of Hayti, was living in Florence, in order that Thomas Clarkson, who was then on a visit to him, might remit to her some hundred and fifty pounds, which he much wished the poor queen to have; but Landor, replying at the beginning of November, told him that all his inquiries to find out her present residence had been fruitless, as she had left Florence three years ago, and he had written to Bologna and to Naples, but could hear nothing. Then he proceeds: "I was going to write to you ten days ago, when I received the very painful intelligence of my poor mother's death. At eighty-five such a loss might have been expected; and, after not seeing her for fifteen years, I fancied I should have been less affected by it. But it is only by the blow itself that early remembrances are awakened to the uttermost. She had always been kind to me. — You do not give me any fresh hopes of seeing you in Italy. I am making a garden, and doing other more foolish things. Such is building; but this is as much for the convenience of my laborers as for mine. I am removing all their offices from my own residence. The Italian gentlemen are fond of pigging with them. I cannot bear any one near me, particularly those who leave traces of their proximity unquestionable to eyes or nose. Whenever you come I can give you two bedrooms and two below; so you may arrange with Mrs. Southey, and bring such of your family as are most inclined for Italy. I shall consider

this the most delightful event that has occurred since my residence abroad. To-day I shall have (they tell me) about fifteen barrels of wine, fifty-five quarts to the barrel. They rob a tenth of it for themselves, and a tenth for the priest. Since Peter Leopold abolished the tithes, the priests tell the contadini they will go to the devil if they assist in such impiety; and, from the robbery of the master, the tithes are as regularly paid as ever. The pious rob both for priest and themselves, being absolved in the default, and placing the theft on the opposite page to the duty. This fact was told me by Piamonte, formerly presidente del buon governo."

Here again were fruitful sources of dispute with "rascally" magistrates, as well as with "pious" thieves; but on the whole, excepting for a quarrel with a neighbor about a watercourse to be presently related, and which engaged all his energies for a time, Landor lived at his new villa quietly enough for nearly six more years. He had been impressed, perhaps more than was usual with him, by Francis Hare's warning, sent when he heard of the recent banishment from Florence, that he would never find anywhere on the Continent so suitable a home. Writing in August from Trinity College, where he was staying with his brother Julius, after eager expression of his delight at hearing of Landor again in Florence, he gives him several reasons for declaring it to be the best and fittest abode for him in Europe; implores him, by all their pleasant memories of it, to contrive not to get into any fresh scrapes that might finally drive him out of it; and pronounces it to be, by all the strictest laws of social intercourse, enough for one gentleman to cane one scoundrel once in one life. Telling him, then, that his brother Augustus has just received from New College the Wiltshire living of Alton Barnes, where Crewe wrote his poem of Lewiston Hill, he closes with an abrupt question, Why is *I* in Italics short, which Landor has answered by scratching across the page the line,

"Omnia namque Italus promittere grandia gaudet."

Soon after receiving this letter, and before yet he knew of his mother's death, Landor had written to his sister Ellen to tell her that there had appeared in Florence the dearest of all the friends he ever had or ever should have, his Ianthe of former years, now a widow of title who had buried two husbands, and remained nevertheless so handsome that an English earl and a French duke were offering their addresses to her, in which the Frenchman was persisting in spite of all discouragement. Talk of time not going back, why, the sudden vision of this one face had rolled back from him in an instant more than twenty years! With which thought, put into verse, he closes his letter:—

"Say ye that years roll on, and ne'er return?  
Say ye the sun, who leaves them all behind  
(Their great creator), cannot bring one back  
With all his force, though he draw worlds around?  
Witness me, little streams that meet before



My happy dwelling, witness Affrico,  
And Mensola! that ye have seen at once  
Twenty roll back, twenty as swift and bright  
As are your swiftest and your brightest waves,  
When the tall cypress o'er the Doccia  
Hurls from his inmost boughs the latent snow."

The "happy dwelling" was his Fiesolan villa; his present great enjoyment of which, how he came into possession of it, and his way of life there, will be best understood from what he wrote at the time to his sisters in Warwick.

#### IV. THE VILLA GHERARDESCHA.

When Leigh Hunt, after many sad disappointments in Pisa and Genoa, found himself in Florence, his refuge from his troubles was to wander about Maiano, a village on the slope of one of the Fiesolan hills, two miles from the city, thinking of Boccaccio. On either side of Maiano were laid the two scenes of his *Decameron*; the little streams that embrace it, the Affrico and Mensola, were the metamorphosed lovers in his *Nimphale Fiesolano*; within view was his villa Gherardi, before the village the hills of Fiesole, and at its feet the Valley of the Ladies. Every spot around was an illustrious memory. To the left, the house of Macchiavelli; still farther in that direction, nestling amid the blue hills, the white village of Settignano, where Michael Angelo was born; on the banks of the neighboring Mugnone, the house of Dante; and in the background, Galileo's villa of Arcetri and the palaces and cathedrals of Florence. In the thick of this noble landscape, forming part of the village of San Domenica di Fiesole, stood the villa which had now become Landor's. The Valley of the Ladies was in his grounds; the Affrico and the Mensola ran through them; above was the ivy-clad convent of the Doccia, overhung with cypress; and from his iron entrance-gate might be seen Valdarno and Vallombrosa. Ten years after Landor had lost this home, an Englishman travelling in Italy, his friend and mine, visited the neighborhood for his sake, drove out from Florence to Fiesole, and asked his coachman which was the villa in which the Landor family lived. "He was a dull dog, and pointed to Boccaccio's. I did n't believe him. He was so deuced ready that I knew he lied. I went up to the convent, which is on a height, and was leaning over a dwarf wall basking in the noble view over a vast range of hill and valley, when a little peasant girl came up and began to point out the localities. *Ecco la villa Landora!* was one of the first half-dozen sentences she spoke. My heart swelled almost as Landor's would have done when I looked down upon it, nestling among its olive-trees and vines, and with its upper windows (there are five above the door) open to the setting sun. Over the centre of these there is another story, set upon the housetop like a tower; and all Italy, except its sea, is melted down into the glowing landscape it commands. I

plucked a leaf of ivy from the convent garden as I looked ; and here it is. For Landor. With my love." So wrote Mr. Dickens to me from Florence on the 2d of April, 1845 ; and when I turned over Landor's papers in the same month after an interval of exactly twenty years, the ivy-leaf was found carefully enclosed, with the letter in which I had sent it.

He began the first New Year's day (1830) passed by him in the villa Gherardescha by writing to his sisters. It had opened inauspiciously as far as weather was concerned. He had to tell them how terrible the season was out there, in what their letters were never tired of calling "sunny Italy." Owing to his living two miles from Florence, it was eight days since the children had been able to go to school, either on foot or in a carriage. The roads were covered with ice, and appeared like so many frozen cataracts. There had been for several days two woodcocks within a few yards of his door, where there was an open spring. He went on to tell them also that his mother's death had set him thinking of old times, and for several weeks there had been moving visibly before his eyes processions of the old Warwickshire faces. There was good ancient Mrs. Cook of Tachbrooke, so patient of him in his boyhood ; how did she carry her many years ? And yet they could not be so many, perhaps not seventy ; though hers was the oldest of all living faces he remembered in his childhood. Poor Mr. and Mrs. Farmer too, with all their Christmas kindnesses to him ; and the Parkhursts, the Venours, the Wades, the Welds, the Cliffords, and many beside. He may perhaps visit England another year : he has had so many invitations ; and from Paris even more. " But my country now is Italy, where I have a residence for life, and literally may sit under my own vine and my own fig-tree. I have some thousands of the one and some scores of the other ; with myrtles, pomegranates, oranges, lemons, gagias, and mimosas in great quantity. I intend to make a garden not very unlike yours at Warwick ; but alas, time is wanting. I *may* live another ten years, but do not expect it. In a few days, whenever the weather will allow it, I have four mimosas ready to place round my intended tomb, and a friend who is coming to plant them." He had also the inscription ready, intimating that he should have lived enough when the tear of that friend had been dried by him ; and of course his *Ianthe* is presumably to be taken as the lady and friend referred to. But whether the tear he was to dry was for her husbands that had been or those that were to be, does not appear ; and from the recollection of a visit I once made to her with Landor some years later in Bath, I should have said that few tears at any time had troubled that still bright, easy, good-humored Irish face.

"Lo, where the four mimosas blend their shade  
In calm repose at last is Landor laid :  
For ere he slept he saw them planted here  
By her his soul had ever held most dear,  
And he had lived enough when he had dried her tear."



The allusion in the first of the additional notes I shall now give from his family letters is to some business arrangements necessitated by his mother's death; and the Shakespeare subscription named in it was one that Doctor Conolly, then a little-known practitioner in Warwick, afterwards famous for services to humanity, had written to interest him in.

FIESOLE : MARCH 22, 1830.

"No other means occur to me of forwarding to Florence the papers relative to the houses at Tachbrooke than the post. The expense is of no consequence. If Henry thinks it requisite to give any money for the little interest I have in them after all he has paid for me on various occasions, I would rather it should be about five pounds for the subscription they are raising for the family that bears the name of Shakespeare, and in which it would be disgraceful if mine did not appear. He is the great glory of our country, and without any second in the universe. I dined on Sunday with Sir Robert Lawley, who gave Julia the key of his opera-box for Monday. We were going, we and three of the children, when the horses gibbed, and we were obliged to give up the scheme. In fact, the road to my house is extremely steep. We have had races here, very capital ones, they say; but I never go to such amusements. . . . I have my garden very much enriched by raspberries and strawberries from France; I have also some black currants, a great treasure everywhere, and here particularly, though they grow wild in the woods of the Apennines. Arnold and Julia are strong and happy, by being perpetually in the air, and having such a garden; so have the two youngest, who are fond of transplanting flowers, but only when they are in full bloom!"

APRIL, 1830.

"I hear that Mr. Arnold, the master at Rugby, is the person most fit of any in the world for the management of a great school. He is the intimate friend of Augustus Hare. . . . By the by, my old acquaintance Mr. Weld, who married the sister of Sir Thomas Clifford, is made a cardinal. At least I believe it is he; for I heard that on the death of his wife he became a monk, and retired into Italy. . . . The weather here is changed much for the better. Some lilacs that I planted just eighteen days ago without a bud are now bursting into flower; and my gooseberries, raspberries, and black currants are in leaf. I expect to have peas by this day month, sowed on the twenty-fourth of last. The air is perfumed up to my bedroom by the mignonette thirty feet under it; indeed more before it reaches my nose, for the kitchen is ten feet and a half high, and the dining-room over is eighteen. The mezereon grows wild in all the Apennines, yet I have not been able to procure a single plant; nor of the cytusus, though it covers the banks of the river for miles."

JULY 1, 1830.

"Weld is not made a bishop, but a cardinal, a prince. The last time I saw his eminence was at Clifton, in his own house, where I dined with him. Sir Thomas Clifford, with whom I had been walking on the downs the day before, told me to eat of the pastry and praise it. I saw him smile, and asked him why he gave me the advice. He replied that Weld always made his own pastry, and that nothing pleased him so much as to have it praised. Indeed it was excellent. He deserved not only a cardinal's hat, but the

fair hand of our good aunt Eyres. Nobody else ever equalled him in the sublimity of this science. I have lately lost at Rome one of the most intelligent and friendly of my acquaintance, Lady Northampton. She had been delivered of a child in the morning, and people in the street were complimenting Lord N. at the moment she died. On his return to the house he found her dead, remarkably well and in good spirits as he had left her three hours before; and he had gone out only to execute some little commissions she had given him, and to tell her friends how favorable had been her accouchement. She was an excellent Greek scholar, and played and sang divinely. My children are all well, and Julia much better than ever she was in her life. She is fat and strong, and always in the air. She amuses herself with her fantail pigeons, her blackbirds, and nightingales. I could not prevent the nests being taken. Three were taken before, — of nightingales, — which grieved me. Upon this she employed some boys to take the fourth nest for her. I never took one in my life, though I have found many. I hear a cuckoo at this moment; but wood-pigeons I must not hope for: they are large and eatable, and an Italian would take a nest of them if it were in the clouds. Happily, within half a mile of my house there are two woods enclosed with stone walls, which preserve a few belonging to the smaller birds, though even nightingales are killed for the spit in every part of Italy. I tremble for my cuckoo, though he keeps within the stone walls; for the young cuckoo is preferred here to young pigeons."

Replying to this last letter his sister very sensibly remarked that she had no objection whatever to cooks becoming cardinals, if they would only stick to their own frying-pans and not meddle with other people's:

JULY 23, 1830.

"My most important news is, I have bought a shepherd-dog, with a tail that curls over the back, and upright ears. These ears look stiff, but they are more pliable than any others. The back is yellowish, the rest whitish, the nose very pointed, and the teeth so sharp, that these dogs are called here wolf-dogs, *cani lupi*. He came very young, and is extremely fond of me. Sir William Gell had two of them at Naples, who used to accompany him on the double flute, and one (Tikkettee) was rarely out of time: but I have heard better voices, even out of Italy. The children are just now very busy in catching grasshoppers for three young nightingales. Nevertheless the three young nightingales like me best, and fly to me over the back of the *cane lupe*, who growls and takes it ill. He wishes to expostulate, and seems to insinuate that they have no business in houses. I tell him that he has reason on his side, but I whisper that something may be said too about *cani lupi*."

CHRISTMAS DAY, 1830.

"This is Christmas day, and I wish it may be a pleasanter one to you than to us. We have rain and snow coming down together. I had several invitations to spend the day in Florence, but the children would insist on my staying at home with them. The English here are all very busy about the political doings that are taking place in every part of Europe. The Florentines are quiet and silent. What their opinions are I neither know nor heed, nor should I be the wiser on the subject if they ventured to speak aloud, for they are all dissemblers and liars from first to last. The spirit of party is more violent among the French abroad than at home."



In a letter just before, his sisters had mentioned their garden as having become one of the little lions at Warwick ; and he is a constant petitioner that they should send him seeds and cuttings for his own. Particularly he wants red filberts, of which there were none now in Italy, though it was their birthplace ; white broom and hollyhock seed, Ipsley double poppies, and some strawberries from Tachbrooke, which he wishes to add to the sixteen varieties he already possesses. Harsh as the weather was on that Christmas day, he was yet able to tell them that all the December month he had cut every week at least sixty well-blown cabbage-roses ; the day before writing he had cut twenty-four, besides as many buds ; and as he wrote, there was growing wild before his window "a most beautiful pointed tulip, with narcissuses and jonquils innumerable ; and the blue iris, the root of which is called orris-root, and used to be mixed in hair-powder."

Anticipating then the desire which all this would awaken in his sisters to know more about the new abode now interesting him so much and affording him such genial occupation, he gave them a description in his next letter (2d February, 1831) which may be read with something still of his own interest and pride in this new possession. I shall only further preface it by the remark that the money so generously advanced for its purchase was repaid upon his son Arnold's attaining to his majority in 1839, and that Mr. Ablett declined to the last to accept any interest on the loan :—

#### DESCRIPTION OF HIS VILLA.

"The children were all sitting so comfortably round the fire on my birthday, that they spoil my intention of writing to you that evening. . . . We have had six cold days, with snow upon the Apennines, and a little of it about half a mile from my villa. You will doubtless be curious to hear something of this villa in which I shall pass the remainder of my life.

"Two years ago, in the beginning of the spring, I took a walk towards Fiesole with a gentleman settled in North Wales, Mr. Ablett. I showed him a small cottage with about twelve acres of land, which I was about to take. He admired the situation, but preferred another house very near it, with a much greater quantity of ground annexed. I endeavored to persuade him to become my neighbor. He said little at the time, beyond the pleasure he should have in seeing me so pleasantly situated : but he made inquiries about the price of the larger house, and heard that it was not to be let, but that it might be bought for about two thousand pounds. He first desired me to buy it for him : then to keep it for myself : then to repay him the money whenever I was rich enough, — and if I never was, to leave it for my heirs to settle. In fact, he refuses even a farthing of interest. All this was done by a man with whom I had not been more than a few months acquainted. It is true his fortune is very large ; but if others equal him in fortune, no human being ever equalled him in generosity.

"I must now give you a description of the place : the front of the house is towards the north, looking at the ancient town of Fiesole, three quarters of a mile off. The hills of Fiesole protect it from the north and northeast winds. The hall is 31 ft. by 22, and 20 high. On the right is a draw-

ing-room 22 by 20; and through it you come to another 26 by 20. All are 20 ft. high. Opposite the door is another leading down to the offices on right and left; and between them to a terrace-walk about a hundred yards long, overlooking Valdarno and Vallombrosa, celebrated by Milton. On the right of the downward staircase is the upward staircase to the bedrooms; and on the left are two other rooms corresponding with the two drawing-rooms. Over the hall, which is vaulted, is another room of equal size, delightfully cool in summer. I have four good bedrooms up stairs, 13 ft. high. One smaller and two servants' bedrooms over these, 10½ ft. high. In the centre of the house is a high turret, a dovecote. The house is 60 ft. high on the terrace side, and 50 on the other; the turret is 18 ft. above the 60. I have two gardens: one with a fountain and fine jet-d'eau. In the two are 165 large lemon-trees and 20 orange-trees, with two conservatories to keep them in winter. The whole could not be built in these days for £10,000. ●

"I am putting everything into good order by degrees: in fact, I spend in improvements what I used to spend in house-rent: that is, about £75 a year. I have planted 200 cypresses, 600 vines, 400 roses, 200 arbutuses, and 70 bays, besides laurustinas, &c., &c., and 60 fruit trees of the best qualities from France. I have not had a moment's illness since I resided here, nor have the children. My wife runs after colds; it would be strange if she did not take them; but she has taken none here; hers are all from Florence. I have the best water, the best air, and the best oil in the world. They speak highly of the wine too; but here I doubt. In fact, I hate wine, unless hock or claret."

This was perhaps his happiest time in Italy. The villa gave him employment at home, for which irritating subjects were forgotten or put aside; the Lawleys and other Warwickshire friends pressed upon him hospitalities which he did not so often decline as of old; with "cordial Hare and joyous Gell" many long-remembered pleasures were associated, Hare and his young wife having come to Florence, and visits at each other's houses being frequently interchanged; acquaintance with Mr. Kenyon too, who with his wife made some stay at Fiesole, had ripened rapidly into a friendship which continued through all his later years; to another visitor from England, Mr. Crabb Robinson, introduced to him by his friend Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, and full of cordial talk about Southey, Wordsworth, and Lamb, he had taken no less kindly; other visitors than his countrymen made occasional pilgrimages from afar to see him; and even his literary exercises were unattended, at the moment, by fevers of impossible design, or self-invited failures and despairs, for he was simply collecting and revising his poems, and had put away for the present in his desk those dialogues in which, as he told Southey, he had introduced Shakespeare and frightened himself. If his sisters would but visit him now, he had never been so able to bid them welcome. They should have his two best rooms, two more beautiful than any in Warwick Castle, perfumed with orange-flowers, tuberoses, violets, and mignonette, growing profusely under the windows. In that February letter they are strongly pressed to come, and to bring with them one of his father's breed of spaniels, and to send Mr. Ablett



another. A message to his brother Robert was in the same letter, telling him his poem was too good for success, and himself too good for failure by any such mistake as marriage. "Henry is the only one of us exactly cut out for the married state. But my extreme fondness for children compensates me for everything." Which he proceeds to show.

"Arnold is not ashamed, though almost thirteen, to throw his arms about my neck and kiss me twenty times together; and the others claim the same right, 'and have their claims allowed.' Yet he is not effeminate. He is very much admired for his manliness and spirit. He fences, speaks French, and reads Greek passably. I hope he will dance, as I have told him that I lost more pleasure by being a bad dancer than by anything else; and since that he begins to practise more."

Very sensible reply to all this was made by his sisters. They could understand his own enjoyment in the caresses of his children, but not, in the absence of any present plan of life and study, the advantage the children were to derive from it in future years. They spoke of their nephew Charles, now a lad of eighteen (the letter is dated in March, 1831), having become a favorite of Dr. Arnold's; so that when their brother Charles had thought of removing him, "I hope not; I cannot spare him," said Arnold. Why should not his cousin come to England, where all his future interests would be? Was it too late even then to give him the advantage of such a school, where he would not be the less respected for his father's name? Landor's rejoinder was in Dr. Arnold's words, but, alas, with far other meaning: "I cannot spare him." He was pleased to hear of Charles, who would keep up the name in England; but Arnold would be content to live in Italy. And as for the two younger boys, though he had once thought of the army and the law for them, he had since been thinking they were less likely to be rogues and impostors if he kept them out of professions. "I lived nearly all the best days of my life on less than £150 a year; they may do the same. A young single man in Italy need not spend more. Music, drawing, reading, occupy more innocently the few hours of life that are worth living than worldly and lucrative pursuits. Happily all three are very fond of one another, and will never scramble." There was no reasoning with such nonsense as this. Such a fool's-paradise can only be shut when the irreparable mischief has been done.

The further letters interchanged in February and March of this year (1831) concerned chiefly the Ipsley estate, and other matters arising out of their mother's death. Landor steadily refuses to profit by the latter incident in any way, and cannot see why his trustees should even think of letting the place. His mother had enjoyed the change of air every summer, and why should not his sisters? Indeed, he would much rather never let it than deprive them of any benefit they might derive from such a change. "Certainly our dear mother prolonged her life by the quiet of the place, and the delight

she took in its beautiful scenery." The furniture he would most assuredly not receive anything from. Let it be given to some honest family in low circumstances, whose fathers or mothers had ever showed any kindness to any of the Landors: some old servant of their grandmother, or their aunt Eyres. "Llanthony, I am afraid, will never be occupied by any one. I proposed to take down the house, and sell the materials; for certainly neither I nor Arnold will ever live there. I never think of it without thinking of the ruin to which it has brought me; leaving me one of the poorest Englishmen in Florence, instead of one of the richest." However, they might not perhaps think him so badly off, if they were to come and see his beautiful villa, his noble hall and staircase. Yet he would rather have had it near Swansea, the part of the world he liked best of any. By choice he would always be within easy walk of the sea. His great failure at Fiesole had been the attempts to raise a turf. He finds the ground will produce everything but grass; so they will know what to send him, and let them not forget his favorite mulberry. The close of his letter turns to the younger generation of Warwickshire names. "Merely names to me, but connected with remembrances that reach beyond them." But he supposes the families go on much the same, *and what would the Lucys think if he were to introduce into a dialogue Shakespeare's old Sir Thomas?* His sisters do not directly answer that; but Elizabeth's next letter has a mention of the Lucys, doubtless arising out of it, which is highly picturesque and suggestive. Some families, she says, never seem to change through all their generations. There are the Lucys, for instance. Old Lucy was at that time sheriff, and she only hopes his little boy of six years old will appear in court with him. "He is a good little fellow, but neither judge nor jury could look grave at him. He is old Lucy precisely. He believes the whole world was made for him and in honor of his dignity. He opens his round little eyes, buttons his round little mouth, inflates his round little face, and is graver than any owl, including his grandpapa."

## V. ENGLAND REVISITED.

That life was to pass without trouble even in the villa Gherardescha, the reader will hardly expect from what he knows of the character of its new lord. At the opening of 1831 I find him in the thick of a terrible dispute with one M. Antoir, an old *attaché* of the French legation, who, having a cottage near the villa, had accused Landor of stopping an underground watercourse supplying the lands of both, and on his peremptory denial had charged him with asserting what was not true. Hereupon Landor challenged the Frenchman, and asked Mr. Kirkup to be his second; agreeing to abide implicitly by the decision of his friend, who consented to act on that condition only. The matter lives vividly in Mr. Kirkup's



memory still, and from his letters the incident is here related. Antoir had enough of the merits of a good fellow to be much liked by his friends; though an *attaché* of the old legitimate days, he had been retained by Louis Philippe's new government for his services and honesty; and his superior, the new minister, took the affair in hand, apparently with the express purpose of seeing him through it safely. "The Count de G.," writes Mr. Kirkup, "was a fine, noble-minded liberal, and a capital minister, too good to last long; and he was soon after succeeded by the Baron Talleyrand. He knew me, and came to consult about it. I had lost one of my best friends, John Scott, by the unfairness of a second, and had made up my mind not to lose another. We agreed there must be no fighting. There were faults on both sides; and if Antoir's was the gravest, Landor's was the first, and they must make and accept mutual explanations. The Count would answer for his man; and I must convince Landor, which you may suppose was no easy task. But I succeeded that evening up at the villa, and pledged my responsibility! I went early the next morning to the Count at the Hotel dell' Arno. He was in bed, but I was shown in. When I told him of my success, he jumped out of bed. He was in his shirt, and he ran to embrace me. I remember I was half afraid of him; he was like a bear. I never saw a man so entirely covered with thick bushy hair. I introduced Landor to him afterwards, and they liked each other much. As a curious proof of our friend's docility and confidence in others at this time, the anecdote may be worth telling." It is also worth giving as a proof that when not left wholly to himself he was never quite unmanageable.

Mr. Kirkup dates the incident at the close of 1830; and from what Landor wrote to his sister in the first week of the February following, it would seem that the difference had not passed away with the duel.

#### FIESOLE: FEBRUARY, 1831.

"I am sorry to hear of Henry's chancery suit. I too am tormented by a rascal about a watercourse. At first I gave up to him everything he asked, although my predecessor would give up nothing; but hearing that I had declared I would rather lose everything than have a lawsuit, he made fresh pretensions, which I must resist, as without the water I lose the produce of nearly a hundred lemon-trees, each at least a century old. They have enjoyed this water unrestricted for above forty years. . . . I hope you will have received a copy of my poems.\* Lady Mulgrave sent me the *Court Gazette*, in which a flaming panegyric is lavished on them, preparatory, I presume, to announcing my appointment to the see of Canterbury. My Latin poetry is thought better than my English. . . . At this season I am so busy grafting my trees that I hardly visit my excellent friend Hare and his most accomplished and sweet-tempered wife once a week. I have grafted forty peaches, twenty-six apricots, fourteen greengages, and as many apples. To-morrow I go to the pears and cherries. Of the morella

\* They were published on commission by Mr. Moxon (Julius Hare guaranteeing the expenses) at the opening of 1831.

I shall have twenty; they do not require a wall here, and are the best fruit we have. But my peaches come from Paris, so do the apples, pears, and several plums. There is no garden in Italy so beautiful as yours was at Warwick even before the late improvements. . . . My sweet little Julia has lately been unwell; but, thank God, is now quite recovered. The boys are all robust as young eagles."

His letter of eight days later was filled with a very different subject. Florence was to have its share in the excitement that followed the Three Days in France; and it will startle many of Landor's later readers to see how little he shared in it, and how low he had at this time pitched his hope for the regeneration of Italy. It was certainly to be said of the Tuscan government at the time, often as he quarrelled with it, that it was mild and equable; nor had the particular insurrectionary movements of which he speaks anything very special to recommend them in the way of patriotism or courage. But one cannot quite see why he should have sneered at the idea of regeneration, whatever the special improbabilities might be of the fact being at all near. He lived to see at least some advances made to it.

#### ITALIAN PATRIOTS IN 1831.

"The disturbances that have broken out in Italy may perhaps make our friends in England a little curious and a little anxious. At Florence there is no danger of any commotion. The people are well contented in general with the government of the grand-duke; and the patriotic party, as some men equally cowardly and restless call themselves, have lately more than ever excited the hatred and contempt of the people. On the grand-duke's return from Saxony these worthless slaves proposed to receive him with a grand illumination; but as the time drew nigh their hearts misgave them, and they attempted to throw the greater part of the expenditure on the inferior classes. Many of these holding places under government were unable to refuse their shilling. However, the military showed no small reluctance; and when it came at last to the clergy, the church, as you may suppose, was in danger. The grand-duke, hearing of the preparations, gave orders that there should be no such equivocal manifestation of the people's joy, and that all the money should be returned. The patriots were indignant, and surrendered their chamberlain's keys; for patriots here accept any gewgaw. The fools expected, from the easy disposition of the prince, that he would request them to retain their offices, but were disappointed. Be assured there is not a patriot in Florence who would have a single pane of glass broken in his window to bring about any change whatever. At my time of life, and with my utter indifference what befalls so rascally a race, you need not apprehend that, in case of a bustle, I should take any part in it. No little pride is excited in me at the recollection that I voluntarily spent more in the Spanish cause, in which neither I nor any of my family had any personal interest, than all these villanous ennobled shopkeepers would voluntarily contribute for the cause they pretend to espouse. Sir Robert Lawley is in high spirits, and thinks the flame will blow nearer. Why he should think it is strange enough, but far more strange why he should wish it. I should not be surprised to see my friend Lord Dillon here again. He was always very enthusiastic for the regeneration of Italy. He is an excellent cavalry officer, and has great coolness in battle, though



nowhere else. I hope, however, he will be content to remain quiet at Ditchley, and that he will be persuaded that although in Italy there may be many changes, there never can be any regeneration. The principle of honor and virtue was extinct in Tuscany long before the Romans appeared. They once had an idea of independence, but never of liberty; and the spirit of petty personal revenge is the only spirit they show now, and almost the only one they ever showed. Lombards are sprung from better blood, and possess both sounder minds and stronger bodies. Nevertheless there is one very respectable person in this city, and attached to his master from a sense of duty: a noble dog of the grand-duke's! With this dog and twenty German cooks and scullions I would engage to drive either of the two parties out of the walls, if the grand-duke would appoint me to the command, and let the dog be led by his feeder. I myself too have a fine and faithful one; the only creature I could ever place the smallest confidence in since I came to Florence. I never let any of the natives enter my doors except Luca Medici and Julia's music-master, a quiet, sober, inoffensive man."

The present troubles of his sisters, however, were not about Italy, but England. Reporting to their brother Walter that the whole country was for reform and destruction, they regretted that their brother Charles did not or would not see the danger, for his last letter to them had been all about foxes and fish; but they described their brother Robert as even more downcast than themselves, and they grieved that their glorious country should have fallen into the hands of fools and rogues. Landor rallies and reassures them.

#### NECESSITY OF REFORM IN ENGLAND. (MAY 20, 1831.)

"You are a little too melancholy in regard to the times. Whatever is happening and about to happen was foreseen by me in the period of Pitt's war against France. He squandered the nation's wealth with more imprudence than the most wanton youth ever squandered his new inheritance; and the facility he found in raising supplies from a venal Parliament shows the necessity of changing the system. The misfortune is that the change had not taken place fifty-five years earlier. Then we should not have lost America, except as a colony and a dependent, and by no means as a confederate and friend. But above all we should have had a debt of about 40 instead of 800 millions."

#### DECEMBER 29, 1831.

"Many happy new years to you! for the new year will have begun before you get my letter. Do not torment yourself either about cholera or about reform. We know that the one is requisite, and may believe the other is. When the good people of England helped Pitt to gamble in war, and to run the nation in debt beyond the value of all the money in Europe, we might easily have foreseen the result. I did see it, and tried to prevent it, in my remonstrance against the income tax. . . . Poor Lord Wenlock is nearly blind, but in good spirits. I dined with him, and found all *corps diplomatique* there, so that politics were set aside. To-day we have snow falling. On the 27th of November the hills four miles off were covered with it, since which we have had fine weather till now. Italy is a fine

climate, but Swansea better. That however is the only spot in Great Britain where we have warmth without wet. Still, Italy is the country I would live in. My house wants new doors and windows: these I shall begin next year, and at the end of three shall have completed them. In two I hope to have a hundred good peaches every day at table during two months: at present I have had as many bad ones. My land is said to produce the best figs in Tuscany; I have usually six or seven bushels of them. The best kinds are peeled before they are dried; those are of a good color. The green and purple are less esteemed, but bear better. Nectarines, gooseberries, raspberries, and currants are better in England than anywhere; in other fruits I hope soon to excel you, even in apricots. . . . I should like one chestnut from the tree on the left of the summer-house."

His next letter was dated on the 7th of February in the following year, and announced a sudden intention formed by him to visit England in May. Ablett had pressed him so much, and his obligations to that friend were so great, that he had not felt justified in continuing to refuse.

In May, 1832, in midst of the excitement that still was attending the great Reform Bill, he arrived accordingly; and on the 14th of that month wrote from London to tell his sisters that he had traversed France safely in the thick of cholera, but that missing the boat at Dieppe, he was kept there a week with nothing to see or read, and nobody to talk to. He had afterwards stayed two days at Brighton with the Countess de Molandè and her family, "in the midst of music, dancing, and fashionable people turned radicals. This amused me highly. Lady Bolingbroke told me that her husband would never enter the House of Lords again. Yesterday I dined with our good old friend Lord Wenlock. This morning the people are half mad about the king and the Tories." He reached London at last, and the very first visit he made was to the address that had been given him as that of his old friend Dr. Lambe,\* in the King's Road; but he failed to find the house. During the three days he now stayed in London, he attended a reception at the Duke of Sussex's, visited Charles Lamb at Enfield, and went up to see Coleridge at Highgate.

In the last two visits his companion was Mr. Crabb Robinson, who had been very anxious that he should see those worthies, and be seen of them. He did not make much of his interview with Coleridge, who, though he put on "a bran-new suit of black" in honor of the visit, and made Landor as many fine speeches as if he had been a little girl, yet managed to keep all the talk to himself, and took no

\* Remembering what has been said by Rough and others of this early friend of Landor's (*ante*, pp. 88, 121), the reader may perhaps be amused by an extract from a letter of Mr. Jefferson Hogg to Landor at the close of 1830. "I sometimes see our estimable friend Dr. Lambe; it is almost impious to say that he is well, wise, and happy, for the affirmation seems to imply a doubt of the efficacy of vegetable matter diluted with distilled water. The last time I met him he told me he had breakfasted on one raw cauliflower, and was just going to dine on another, and in the evening he was to meet the whole college of physicians about some professional matters. It is plain that if a man of his years can feed thus, and then go boldly and look death in the face, his best friends have nothing else to wish for him, save that God may give him grace to like his diet."



notice of an enthusiastic mention of Southey ; but the hour he passed with Lamb was one of unalloyed enjoyment. A letter from Crabb Robinson before he came over had filled him with affection for that most lovable of men, who had not an infirmity that his sweetness of nature did not make one think must be akin to a virtue. "I have just seen Charles and Mary Lamb," Crabb had written (20th October, 1831), "living in absolute solitude at Enfield. I found your poems lying open before Lamb. Both tipsy and sober he is ever muttering *Rose Aylmer*. But it is not those lines only that have a curious fascination for him. He is always turning to *Gebir* for things that haunt him in the same way."\* Their first and last hour was now passed together, and before they parted they were old friends. I visited Lamb myself (with Barry Cornwall) the following month, and remember the boyish delight with which he read to us the verses which Landor had written in the album of Emma Isola. He had just received them through Robinson, and had lost little time in making rich return by sending Landor his *Last Essays of Elia*. "Pray accept," he wrote, "a little volume. 'Tis a legacy from Elia, you'll see. Silver and gold had he none ; but such as he had left he you. I do not know how to thank you for attending to my request about the album. I thought you would never remember it. Are not you proud and thankful, Emma ? Yes, *very both*." And then underneath the words is the feminine signature of his young friend. "If you can spare a moment," Lamb adds, "I should be happy to hear from you. That rogue Robinson detained your verses till I called for them. Don't intrust a bit of prose to the rogue, but believe me your obliged C. L. My sister sends her kind regards."

Landor's next visit was to Julius Hare at Cambridge. He saw now for the first time the friend to whose judgment and active kindness he owed so much, and passed three delightful days with him. Then he went to exchange greetings with his sisters at Warwick ; and after a week with them, made more joyous by the frequent presence of Mr. Kenyon, who with his wife was then staying at Leamington, he pushed on to join Mr. Ablett in North Wales.

From Llanbedr he wrote to his sisters in July. He and Ablett were to leave in another week for Lancashire and Cumberland, where he proposed to spend a day or two with Southey, and about as much time with Wordsworth. He described his friend's Welsh home as abounding in magnificent trees, with the richest valley in the world, as well as the most varied hills ; and with lofty mountains not too near, nor too distant, but just as great folks should be. He declared that every cottage on the estate was more habitable than the best house on the Continent, for that every one had a patent oven and a clock, and was surrounded by a garden.

\* He has quoted in his "Margate Hoy" (*Essays of Elia*) one that he was much given, at all odd out-of-the-way times, to repeat to himself:—

"Is this the mighty Ocean? is this all?"

Our next glimpse of him is at the Lakes with Southey and Wordsworth, to whom he introduces Ablett, but with whom his stay is more brief than was at first intended, because of other unlooked-for claims upon him. But an evening was spent in company with both, recollected afterwards for its talk of poets and poetry, wherein I remember his telling me he thought scant justice was done to Byron by his friends, and insufficient appreciation given to Scott; for that, when he had himself quoted from the latter a line about the dog of a traveller lost in the mountain snows, the comment it drew forth was a remark upon it by Wordsworth as the only good line in the piece, with addition that the very same subject had been treated in one of his own poems, which he thereupon recited from beginning to end. I have heard him say also, that, objection having been taken to an over-abundance of imagery in the prose of the *Conversations*, Wordsworth unluckily took to himself a remark made in reply, that prose will bear a great deal more of poetry than poetry will bear of prose. The other trace that remains of the visit was left in the album of Wordsworth's daughter, whose earnest intercession for Landor's autograph was seconded with such gracious approval from Wordsworth himself, that Landor could not but sit down and write

“AT WORDSWORTH'S DESIRE.

“Glorious the names that cluster here,  
The loftiest of our lofty isle —  
Who can approach them void of fear,  
Though Genius urge and Friendship smile?  
To lay one stone upon the hill,  
And show that I have climbed so high,  
Is what they bid me. Wordsworth's will  
Is law, and Landor must comply.”

Once again, before leaving Cumberland, the friends met at the seat of a common friend of both Ablett and Wordsworth, Mr. Rawson of Wastwater; and here, not from Landor only, but from Wordsworth himself, a further tax of album verses, made popular for the time among the friends by Charles Lamb's pleasant little volume published a short while before, was exacted. Landor celebrated the scenery around, and praised its master's modest wisdom, content to hear nature's voice, to shun loud acclaim, “and in his heart find all he wants of fame.” Wordsworth, in the same spirit, describing time as in its blindness reproducing ever the troubles it destroys, and bringing happiness only to bear it away, praises his friend for having discerned and set above all time's illusive hopes the will of its eternal master.

I heard myself from Mr. Ablett two or three years later of the happy day thus passed at Wastwater; and the account which I well remember he gave me of the laughable vehemence with which Landor had then denounced the word *impugn*, employed by Southey in the course of their talk, and given up by him, after unavailing defence,



to his friend's immitigable wrath, receives amusing confirmation from a reply which I find he made to a letter written immediately after returning to Keswick by Southey, who, finding the word in Spenser and Shakespeare as well as in Crammer and South, felt he must retract his too hasty surrender, and had taken heart to say so to his friend. "Spenser and Shakespeare," retorts Landor, "have employed words ugly enough, but this is the most odious. South himself, highly as I estimate him, and even you, whose language is still better, will never push me across the road to shake hands with this uncouth ruffian. You tell me that we have the word, not from the French, but the Normans. I do not remember any such word in our very oldest writers, though Crammer is pretty old; and had I found it in Chaucer himself, whom I admire and venerate, I should pity the duress in which so cruel a bolt was manacled upon him. I do not like the metaphor: we have in our language too many such, arising for the most part from the reformers and sectarians. However, if you *will* put your stamp upon the word, it must pass on."

The friends separated here, and after a couple of days Southey wrote to say that Landor's recent apparition had been to them as a dream, but as the pleasantest of dreams, and one that was never to be indistinctly remembered. This Landor answered from Warwick, which, he tells his friend, after what appeared to him almost an age of wandering, he had reached the preceding week; which formerly of all places in the world was the most quiet and idle, but now was joining its own noises to those of Leamington. "I remember the time, not forty years ago, when Leamington had only two tenements that joined each other, and in the whole village only six or seven of any sort, besides the squire's, one Prew, who was the uncle of my grandmother. If her brother had lived, he would have had this vast property, at that time a small one. I cannot help smiling at the narrow escape I have had of three such encumbrances."

From Julius Hare he heard in the same week that his visit had left with Wordsworth also the pleasantest impression. Julius had seen much of the great poet in that and the preceding year, having passed some time with him at Rydal; "and rarely indeed in the course of life," he wrote to Landor, "is one allowed to take such a survey of all that is lofty and all that is profound in our nature, as one obtains from living with him in his home. The moral atmosphere he breathes around him is so pure that all looks fairer and brighter than elsewhere. He has frequently desired me to give you his kindest remembrances and the assurances of his highest regard. Your politics did *not* alarm him. He was in excellent health and spirits, and talked with all the alacrity of youth of the day you passed with him." To this I will add the comment afforded by some sentences from a letter sent by Hare to Landor in the midsummer of the previous year (1831), which future biographers of the poet may thank me for preserving. "When Wordsworth was last with us at the end of April, I was very

much grieved to find how much the state of the country and the ministerial reform bill had preyed upon his health. Everybody said he seemed to have grown ten years older in the last three months. If the bill does all the good which its most infatuated advocates anticipate, it will hardly make amends for this evil." The anticipation of both evil and good is almost always in excess ; and brief as were the months that had brought the poet back to his alacrity of youth, they had doubtless satisfied him also that the country was getting on its legs again.

We hear of Landor next in Richmond and in London, from which he wrote to his sisters on the 24th of September to say that his English visit was coming to its close. His wife's family, with whom he had been staying at Richmond, had been most kind to him, but he was very impatient to be again among his own creatures. Cholera had been with him on every side as he travelled, but he had tried to be a match for it, and it would be very spiteful of it to do for him anywhere but at his own villa, where he had a place prepared, and where his two laborers were to have a crown each for planting him. Their brother Robert would tell them of the fortunate meeting "before the inn at Evesham, where his carriage and my coach had stopped" ; and they would have heard of his visit to Charles at Colton. On the following Saturday he meant to leave England, and they would probably receive meanwhile some pictures he had intrusted to Mr. Ablett for them.

Julius Hare and one of his Cambridge friends (since master of Downing) accompanied Landor on his return. They travelled through Belgium, up the Rhine to Frankfort, and through Munich and the Tyrol into Italy. He reached Florence on the last day of November, and on the 25th of the following month wrote to his sisters one remembrance of his journey : —

#### FIESOLE : CHRISTMAS DAY, 1832.

"We are enjoying the most serene and brilliant sky, with our windows open. In going through the Tyrol, the snow fell upon us furiously, and we were in danger of passing the winter at Inspruch. I conversed with several of the companions of Andrew Hofer, and received from one of them a narrative of his death. Nothing was ever more heroic, — not even his life. He said : 'I pray God to protect my children and their mother, and to pardon her brother, and to let his *fault* be forgotten.' Now what do you think his fault was? Betraying to the French this brave and righteous man. Hofer and Lord Collingwood are in my opinion the two noblest characters of the present age."

After he quitted Hofer's country, and while staying with his friends in Venice, a city that he held always to be incomparable among cities as Shakespeare among men, he had put into his own language what he thus heard from the Tyrolese peasants, and sent it over to England for publication. At the same time he sent also to Kenyon an ode to Southey and an ode to Wordsworth, written while yet he had lingered amid the passes of the Tyrol. Much pleasant verse was in



the latter, on the company of immortals with whom he ranked his friend; and very pleasantly it closed by wishing them

"Every joy above  
That highly blessed spirits prove,  
Save one: and that too shall be theirs,  
But after many rolling years,  
When 'mid their light Thy light appears."

Nor will the reader object that I should add the closing verse of the yet nobler ode to Southey, in which, referring to the old dedication of the *Curse of Kehama*, there is the grand exaggeration of thanks and praise which, from Raleigh and Spenser downward, poets have exercised the right to give to brother poets, without exception or challenge:—

"Not, were that submarine  
Gem-lighted city mine,  
Wherein my name, engraven by thy hand,  
Above the royal gleam of blazonry shall stand;  
Not, were all Syracuse  
Poured forth before my Muse,  
With Hiero's cars and steeds, and Pindar's lyre  
Brightening the path with more than solar fire,  
Could I as would beseem requite the praise  
Showered upon my low head from thy most lofty lays."

"As soon as I read your ode to Southey," wrote Kenyon to Landor (16th January, 1833), "I resolved to print it. I sounded S. on the subject, and then sent it to the *Athenæum*, the Editor of which deferred it for a week, that it might give *éclat* to the first paper of the year. Southey said something about omitting the last stanza, as beyond the occasion; but this I did not attend to." Crabb Robinson wrote to him a few months later that Wordsworth was extremely grateful, though he thought Southey's ode the best, and wished that, in his own, Dryden had been praised less and Spenser more.

Other notices of the year that followed his return to Italy are taken from his letters to his sisters.

#### SERVANTS IN ITALY: JANUARY 19, 1833.

"We have a cook, to whom we pay six crowns and a half a month, who sends up more coals than meat, and consumes a hundred weight of charcoal in a day; that is, to the value of two shillings. I wish it were possible to get servants from England: I would not have one Italian. I am well convinced that in eighteen months I should save greatly more than the expense of bringing them over. No woman will cook here, nor open a door. As for marketing, I have a laborer (the only honest man within many miles) who serves. If you know of any woman for my wife who can work and iron, &c., any cook, and a man, I will pay their expenses and give each a bottle of good wine daily. This is a great bribe to an Englishman. The Italians drink two or three. I will give the wages usual in England. Every Italian is a thief by nature, and no foreigner can gain the slightest redress."

JANUARY 30, 1833.

"The people are in a state of desperation because no snow has fallen. In consequence of this real calamity we shall have no water in the wells all next summer. Last summer it was sold at fourpence for three gallons; and many thousand lemon-trees died because the proprietors did not choose to buy it at such an exorbitant price. Lemon-trees must be watered every other day, and most abundantly, even till the water runs through. I have 200, all in wretched condition. I am now putting my house in good order. I wish you and Elizabeth would come and see it. To me it appears a perfect Paradise, but unluckily more than one devil has got into it, and of that race of devils that do anything rather than tempt."

SEPTEMBER 9, 1833.

"I have lately planted 1,300 vines, 100 olives, and 40 fruit-trees. I shall probably make about five pipes of wine this year; half is the contadino's, half of everything. My two pipes and a half will not be worth above £12, such is the abundance of grapes. If the land were in the plain, the value would be about £4. But I hope to receive for my oil about £20, if indeed I sell it. All other crops were carried away by the heavy rains, and the fruit-trees were ruined last summer, oranges and lemons included. It rained but twice in six months, and those were violent and transitory thunder-storms. The annual fête at Siena is going on, and the grand-duke and his spouse are made much of. They say she is pretty. I never saw her, and probably never shall, for I wish to keep away from princes and all belonging to them. I am quite content with my dogs and cats, which are much better people, though (between ourselves) Sir William Gell's tickettee has learnt to swear,—the first dog that ever condescended to this cattish vice; and my favorite cat, Chinchillo, who always follows me about the fields, killed thirteen half-grown chickens in a single night. Not long before he had extirpated two entire generations of rabbits. I am afraid he will be found to be in correspondence with Captain Rock, though I never heard of his subscribing to the Catholic rent, or to the maintenance of O'Connell. His language, when he is accused, is as innocent and naïve as any Paddy's in the world. He confesses everything. He always says, 'Ay, ay!'"

NOVEMBER 25, 1833.

"Among the visitors I have had the pleasure of receiving lately are Mr. Lytton Bulwer, author of *Eugene Aram*, and Captain Basil Hall. I am expecting every day my friend Augustus Hare, and his brother Marcus, who has just now married a daughter of Sir John Stanley. The Hares are beyond all comparison the most pleasant family of men I ever was acquainted with. Francis wants me to dine with him at Rome on Christmas day, Sir John Paul's birthday, when a dozen or two of both families will meet at his house. But I have old recollections and old feelings about Christmas, and never will dine from home again on that day. The only time I ever did was at Rome with poor Lady Paul. Florence is fuller of English than it has been for several years. Lord Pembroke is here among the rest; and Lord and Lady Castlehaven, Lord Conyngham's pretty daughter, are coming. People talk of war. Certainly some movements are being made among the diplomates. We have happily a very firm and sensible man in that capacity, Mr. George Hamilton Seymour, son of Lord George Seymour. I am afraid, however, that the ill health of his father will remove



him from us shortly, though he will return. His wife, a daughter of General Trevor, is quite delightful. My children are studying German, but Italian mouths (as theirs are) seem to taste German after Italian as you would taste sloes after raspberries and cream. Carlino quizzes, and learns by quizzing; as I learnt to dance a minuet (the only dance I ever did learn) by mocking poor old Helme."

Here again was the old careless way of adverting to the studies of his children. But it was now becoming pressingly urgent that he should arrive at some decision respecting the education of Arnold. Julius Hare during the last two years had made unavailing inquiries in England for a suitable person to undertake it, and at last had succeeded in finding one whilst travelling in Germany. Landor is expecting the new tutor from Bonn (26th March, 1833), M. Schiemers, immediately; and fears he will find his pupil indolent. "But let him be healthy, honorable, and well-bred, and I care little about his learning."

#### VI. AGAIN IN ITALY: OLD PICTURES AND NEW FRIENDS.

Landor had by this time become known, not wisely but too well, among the Italian picture-dealers, who passed through his hands as many rare old masters as would have set up the fortunes of half the galleries in Europe. In this as in too many other things he had no other judgment than his will; and a cheerful self-imposture enabled him in perfect good faith to carry on the imposture honestly with all, even the rascals who made it their commodity. He would so prepare you by a letter for his Rubens or his Raffaele, or in its presence would do it homage with such perfect good faith, that your own eyes were as ready as his to be made fools to the other senses. "Your picture found its way to Alton," wrote Augustus Hare to him in the summer of 1833, "and we thought it almost worthy of the letter which announced its coming. More perfect than that letter it could not have been, if Raffaele had painted the whole of it." Often have enjoyments in this way been mine which the presence of the real masters could not have made addition to; and never had I reason to question his own belief that the canvas did actually contain the glories that were but reflected on it from imagination and desire. It was incident to such treasures of course that they should rapidly accumulate; here and there even a real master crept in; and what with the splendor of the frames, the show upon his walls became magnificent. But the principle of the collection admitted hardly of a limit, and the treasures overflowed. He had taken several with him to England. Ablett had a Carlo Dolce; his sisters some Claudes and Canalettis; and his brother Henry, with special injunction that he should place them at Tachbrooke, which in part he had lately repurchased, some masters as old as Perugino. He now tells his sisters (8th January, 1834) that he has a great many more pictures going to

them, only delayed by the rogues in the custom-house wanting more money. As to his brother's or their offering to pay for them, that was quite out of the question. He had more than he has room for, as his windows are low, not reaching to the middle height of the apartments: and they were to tell Henry that his batch would follow. They would be very old ones, Cimabues and Giotto's, and were getting ready from suppressed convents and monasteries at Prato and Pistoia. In later years I partook myself of this munificence; and I well remember, when I then met Julius Hare with Landor at Kenyon's dinner-table, with what a grave smile, lighting up the deep-marked lines of his thoughtful face, he spoke of his drawing-room at Hurstmonceaux as perhaps the only one in England that had seven virgins in it almost all of them three hundred years old.

The notices that follow are from Landor's letters to his sisters in 1834, the last that were to be written to them from his home in Italy.

JANUARY 8, 1834.

"We have had no winter yet. A friend dined with me on Christmas day, and we should have dined out of doors if dinner had not been ordered as late as five. The flies have never been so troublesome or so numerous all the summer as they are now. I have jonquils in full flower, two or three roses nearly open, and five or six hundred in bud; not the Chinese rose, which with us is an evergreen. I am busy in planting 1,200 vines and 240 olives. My trees are old, and require renewing; some of the olives are four or five hundred years old and literally have nothing but bark and branches. In cutting down one, we found a boundary-stone perfectly enclosed in it and overgrown by the bark. . . . I wish the children were more contented with their governess: never was there upon earth a less agreeable person. Arnold's tutor is a very good creature; he understands Latin and Greek, but is quite a German. The music-master is my ruin. He costs me £50 a year. He is, however, the best perhaps in Italy, and has seven miles to come and go three times a week, as he lives at the other extremity of Florence, and we are two miles and a third from the nearest gate."

AUGUST 27, 1834.

"We have heard that Coleridge is dead. He had recovered his health when I saw him, and told me that he had not been better for many years. Poor man! He put on a brand-new suit of black to come down and see me, and made me as many fine speeches as he ever could have done to a pretty girl. My heart aches at the thought that almost the greatest genius in the world, and one so friendly to me, is gone from it. Southey too is likely to suffer the most severe affliction, not merely in the death of his old friend, but his wife (he says) has been long declining in health, and he fears to lose her. She too, when I saw her, was florid and strong, and had not begun to bear the appearance of age in any respect whatever. I hear wonderful things of a new poem by Mr. Taylor, Philip Van Artevelde."

SAME DATE: A NEW BOOK.

"Before a month is over, you or Harry (it comes to the same thing) will receive a very curious book, 'The Examination of William Shakespeare



before Sir Thomas Lucy *touching Deer-Stealing.*' Of course it will interest Henry more than you, being law.' It is not impossible that I may be very soon in England, for I have told Lord Mulgrave that I would accept the Archbishopric of Canterbury, if he would obtain a commendam from the king for me to hold the Popedom at the same time. But perhaps the popular outcry against pluralities may raise some difficulty. I begin to sicken of Italy; for five entire months we have not had rain enough to wash a pocket-handkerchief, and no dew. Even the big leaves are falling off: my pear-trees and peaches are withered. I shall lose nearly sixty. The apricots stand it for the present."

In the same letter he sends word of another consignment of pictures on their way to his sisters and to Henry. The last had been most successful. Their thanks were profuse; and his sister Elizabeth had described amusingly Henry's enthusiasm, as he knelt before the virgins and children, no less a picture than they. His next letter replies to questions they had put to him about the subjects and masters that formed this new present, which in the interval had also reached them.

NOVEMBER 17, 1834.

"You ask me who Filicaia is. Alas, of how little value is Fame! Wordsworth says he has written the best ode in existence. A noble ode indeed it is, on the raising the siege of Vienna by John Sobieski. It is not, however, the best in existence by many. Some of Milton's sonnets, and his *Allegro* and *Penoso*, are infinitely more vigorous in thought and fancy. The lady, half-length, with pearls, &c., is Marie de' Medici, and belonged to the Medici family, with whom I made the exchange. It is painted by Soutermans, who was considered in his time as the rival of Vandyke. By the by, the Lelys at Warwick Castle, which are called Vandykes, remind me that I saw Lord Warwick in Florence a few days ago. Was there ever so great a change in the human countenance? Again to the pictures. The Esther is by the son of Paul Veronese, not by Paul himself. Joseph holding the infant Jesus is by Ludovico Carracci, the rarest of the Carracci, and by much the best. All these are for you. The rest for Henry; excepting the two landscapes (called early ones by Rubens), and the Salvator, the fellow of which was sold for sixty louis, which three are for my cousin Walter. The two other landscapes, called by Rubens, I doubt of; though they are very clear and clever pictures. The scene before the door of an inn, which Henry likes, is by Teniers. I requested him to let me know how much room he has left for *old* pictures; I mean for those painted before the year 1500. I have many left; and some are much better than those I sent him, although less curious. I have also five more for you: but they must be lined and cleaned and varnished. The sun and flies ruin the pictures here, and they must all be lined and cleaned sooner or later."

This last batch of pictures, his sister Elizabeth tells him in reply, had become quite "the rage" at Warwick, all sorts of people flocking to see them; but they and their brother had not yet divided the spoil. Her previous letter (22d October), urgently pressing him to pay them another visit in the ensuing year, had given him the melancholy news that Southey's wife had become quite deranged, and was placed in an asylum at York; but if the details had not appeared in Southey's life, the fact would not have been mentioned here.

NOVEMBER 29, 1834.

"I had heard from Mrs. Hodgson, whom you remember as Margaret Holford, the deplorable account of Mrs. Southey, and it totally deprived me of rest. Poor good Southey, what must be his sufferings! The Countess von Schaffgotsche has left us, and Julia has now the governess of Mr. Collingwood's daughters, Miss D'Arville; she has been with us five months, and we are much pleased with her. Arnold's German tutor has obtained a good situation at Rome, and we have engaged Mr. McCarthy, who was secretary to Lord Wenlock. Arnold and Julia come on prodigiously in German, and Arnold has the finest voice I ever heard. He is more shy than he was, and has less manner; but never was there a more perfect being in temper and principle. He takes too little pains to be pleasing, and yet he pleases everybody. . . . I thank you for your Russian receipt. It appears the Russians make their steaks and their wives tender by the same process (beating with a stick). I received a letter last week from my friend Ablett. He reminds me of the promise I made him to renew my visit in three years. Certainly I shall see you next April or May. Julia will go to her mother, and take the two youngest. I will make my first visit to you with Arnold and Julia, and after a week or fortnight proceed to Denbighshire. I send these verses for my answer."

The "verses" were that fine ode to Joseph Ablett to be found in the collected works, which will preserve his friend's name as long as his own survives. I give a great part of it here as written in this letter, because of the many changes made in it as printed, where the opening stanza is enlarged into two, and the couplet on Coleridge's death is omitted altogether. The allusion to Leigh Hunt was an afterthought, but sent in a letter of only a week's later date. A line more perfect than that upon Wordsworth and Southey,

"Serene creators of immortal things,"

in which more is said or set to a lovelier music, hardly exists in poetry. It is what Marlowe called the gem of peerless price, infinite riches in a little room.

"Lord of the lovely plain,  
Where Celtie Clwyd runs to greet the Main,  
How happy were the hours that held  
Thy friend (long absent from his native home)  
Amid those scenes with thee! how far afield  
From all past cares and all to come!

"Together we have visited the men  
Whose song Scotch outcries vainly would have drowned;  
Ah, shall we ever grasp the hand again  
That gave the British harp its truest sound?  
Coleridge hath heard the call, and bathes in bliss  
Among the spirits that have power like his.  
Live, Derwent's guest! and thou by Grasmere springs!  
Serene creators of immortal things.

"And live too thou for happier days  
Whom Dryden's force and Spenser's fays  
Have heart and soul possess:  
Growl in grim London he who will,  
Revisit thou Maiano's hill,  
And swell with pride his sunburnt breast.



'Old Redi in his easy-chair  
 With varied chant awaits thee there,  
 And here are voices in the grove  
 Aside my house, that make me think  
 Bacchus is coming down to drink  
 To Ariadne's love.

I never courted friends or Fame;  
 She pouted at me long, at last she came,  
 And threw her arms around my neck and said,  
 'Take what hath been for years delayed,  
 And fear not that the leaves will fall  
 One hour the earlier from thy coronal.'

"Ablett! thou knowest with what even hand  
 I waved away the offered seat  
 Among the clambering, clattering, stilted great,  
 The rulers of our land;  
 Nor crowds nor kings can lift me up,  
 Nor sweeten Pleasure's purer cup.

"Thou knowest how, and why, are dear to me  
 My citron groves of Fiesole.

Here can I sit or roam at will;  
 Few trouble me, few wish me ill,  
 Few come across me, few too near;  
 Here all my wishes make their stand;  
 Here ask I no one's voice or hand;  
 Scornful of favor, ignorant of fear.

Behold our Earth, most nigh the sun  
 Her zone least opens to the genial heat,  
 But farther off her veins more freely run:  
 'T is thus with those who whirl about the great;  
 The nearest shrink and shiver; we remote  
 May open-breasted blow the pastoral oat."

On the 26th of January, 1835, he wrote again to his sisters, very anxious about Ellen's health, as to which ill report had reached him, and promising Henry at least twenty more pictures, most of them greatly better than the first, and quite as curious, "excepting the Cimabues, which nobody else possesses, I mean no private man." Its opening allusion is to some Warwick friends he had called upon.

#### JANUARY 26, 1835.

"The next morning our minister, George Seymour, came to see me, and I desired him to present them at Court, when she finds herself strong enough for giving parties. He will show them every possible attention. I never knew a man I liked better than Seymour, and his friendship for me is equal to my regard for him. And now I must tell you that that wicked book about Shakespeare has called forth the most eloquent piece of criticism in our language. You will find it in the *Examiner*. Let me recommend to you Leigh Hunt's *London Journal*, three halfpence a week. It contains neither politics nor scandal, but very delightful things in every department of graceful literature. It has copied, I hear, word for word, the splendid eulogy of the *Examiner*, in its 38th number of December 17. I intend to send for this paper from its commencement. I am sorry to hear of Charles Lamb's death. If you have not read the *Essays of Elia*, pray send for

them. I did hope to see once more both him and poor Coleridge. I have addressed some lines to his sister, whose affecting history I will tell you some day.

Comfort thee, O thou mourner, yet awhile!  
 Again shall Elia's smile  
 Refresh thy heart, where heart can ache no more.  
 What is it we deplore?

He leaves behind him, freed from griefs and years,  
 Far worthier things than tears:  
 The love of friends without a single foe;  
 Unequalled lot below! . . .

Are not his footsteps followed by the eyes  
 Of all the good and wise?  
 Though the warm day is over, yet they seek  
 Upon the lofty peak

Of his pure mind the roseate light that glows  
 O'er death's perennial snows.  
 Behold him! from the region of the blest  
 He speaks: he bids thee rest.

And now I must transcribe for you some verses written on my Carlino by Mr. Milnes."

Being already in type, they may be omitted here. Addressed "to a child with black eyes and golden hair," they stand first in Mr. Milnes's *Poems of many Years*; and, with others to Landor's second son in the *Memorials of a Residence on the Continent*, under the date of "Fiesole, 1833," they commemorate the introduction to Landor in that year of one who held always afterwards a high place among his friends. The very last of Landor's letters from Italy to Southey was brought over in 1835 by Mr. Milnes, whom it introduced to the laureate; and one of the last received in Italy by Landor, also a letter of introduction for a young poet, was taken over to him by Mr. Swinburne from Lord Houghton after nearly thirty years. Their friendship during the interval had been uninterrupted.

To this date belongs also the personal knowledge of Emerson, which Landor valued as a compliment worthy to have received. "You will hardly remember my name," wrote Emerson to him three years later, "and I will therefore remind you that in the spring of 1833 I was indebted to your hospitality and courtesy at Florence, as I had already been, and shall always be, to your wisdom." This letter accompanied some books which Mr. Charles Sumner had brought with him to England in 1837, as an acknowledgment of the "delight and instruction" derived from the *Imaginary Conversations*.

From the American sculptor Greenough, himself a man of genius, Emerson had received, through a common friend, Landor's invitation to San Domenico di Fiesole; and on the 15th of May he went up to dine with him. "I found him noble and courteous, living in a cloud of pictures at his villa Gherardescha, a fine house commanding a beautiful landscape. I had inferred from his books, or magnified from some anecdotes, an impression of Achillean wrath, — an un-



tamable petulance. I do not know whether the imputation were just or not, but certainly on this May day his courtesy veiled that haughty mind, and he was the most patient and gentle of hosts." Emerson proceeds to hint at some of their talk, from which one is prepared to find that Landor produced on his American admirer the effect of a man decided in his opinions, rather liking to surprise, and well content to impress, if possible, his English whim upon even the immutable past. "No great man ever had a great son, if Philip and Alexander be not an exception; and Philip he calls the greater man. In art he loves the Greeks, and in sculpture them only. He prefers the Venus to everything else, and, after that, the head of Alexander in the gallery here. He prefers John of Bologna to Michael Angelo; in painting, Raffaele; and shares the growing taste for Perugino and the early masters. The Greek histories he thought the only good, and after them Voltaire's. I could not make him praise Mackintosh, nor my more recent friends; but Montaigne very cordially, and Charon also, which seemed indiscriminating." He appears to have talked, too, of Wordsworth, Byron, Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher; to have lauded Southey, somewhat to the impatience of his visitor; to have expressed great admiration for Washington; and to have praised the beautiful cyclamen which grows all about Florence.

A second time Emerson shared the hospitality of the villa, and this time Greenough accompanied him, when Landor entertained them by reciting at once half a dozen hexameter lines of Julius Cæsar's! from Donatus, he said. "He glorified Lord Chesterfield more than was necessary, and undervalued Burke, and undervalued Socrates; designated as three of the greatest of men, Washington, Phocion, and Timoleon; and did not even forget to remark the similar termination of their names. A great man, he said, should make great sacrifices, and kill his hundred oxen without knowing whether they would be consumed by gods and heroes, or whether the flies would eat them." Emerson had seen some wonderful microscopes in Florence, and spoke of the uses to which they were applied; but he found that "Landor despised entomology, yet in the same breath said *the sublime was in a grain of dust*": which anticipated the fine saying by Herschel about the microscope and telescope being explorers of the infinite "in both directions." Emerson adds to these notices of Landor's talk, after mentioning one of his rooms filled with pictures, that he had been more curious to see his library; but that one of the guests at the dinner told him Landor gave away all his books, and had never more than a dozen at a time in his house. Which indeed was perfectly true.

The sum of Mr. Emerson's impressions of the famous Englishman, one of the three or four he had come so far to see, written thirteen years after they thus had met, shall be given in his own words. "Mr. Landor carries to its height the love of freak which the English delight to indulge, as if to signalize their commanding freedom. He

has a wonderful brain, despotic, violent, and inexhaustible, meant for a soldier, by some chance converted to letters, in which there is not a style nor a tint not known to him, yet with an English appetite for action and heroes. The thing done avails, and not what is said about it. An original sentence, a step forward, is worth more than all the censures. Landor is strangely undervalued in England; usually ignored; and sometimes savagely attacked in the reviews. The criticism may be right or wrong, and is quickly forgotten; but year after year the scholar must still go back to Landor for multitudes of elegant sentences, for wisdom, wit, and indignation that are unforgettable."

A sudden departure of some friends whom he wished to accompany to Venice took Emerson away from Florence at the close of May, and compelled him to say adieu to Landor by letter instead of in person. The letter thanked him earnestly for his ready hospitality to a stranger, and took occasion "at the same time again to acknowledge a very deep debt of pleasure and instruction to the author of the *Imaginary Conversations*."

Nearly twenty years later, when Landor had his home in Bath, and while the Exhibition of '51 was bringing all the world to London, he was reminded by the American sculptor who thus visited him with Emerson of one subject that had arisen in their conversation under his "fig-trees on the southern slope of the Fiesolan hills," not included in his countryman's recollections. Looking down on the little village where Michael Angelo was born, they had spoken of the kind of art that the Tuscan princes had chosen chiefly to encourage in Florence, since the date when the founder of the monarchy entered as prince, and Michael Angelo went out as exile. This was the art of mosaic: the school for fashioning "piebald mineralogical specimens into a greater or less resemblance of fruits, flowers, and landscapes"; which had flourished while Giotto was overlaid with whitewash and Leonardo and Raffaello were carried off by strangers from their native cities; and which had dared at last to rear, by the very side of the tombs of Giuliano and Lorenzo, the so-named (and well-named) Chapel of the Princes, all whose ornaments were the products of its Chinese industry and Turkish taste. Mr. Greenough reminded Landor of a remark he had made upon their having with such gewgaws brushed the very beard of the sculptor of Moses, that it was "as if a fellow in a laced coat should start up to claim attention where Caesar was and was speaking"; and what now would he say to the production that had been sent over from Florence to represent the birthplace of Buonarrotti at the world's fair, which was neither more nor less than a table in pietra dura that had cost a hundred thousand francesconi, or, in other words, a day's work of four hundred thousand Tuscans! "I cannot but think," was Greenough's appeal to Landor, "that such stolid impertinence as this calls for justice at your hand. I know no one else who unites the knowledge and feeling necessary to judge



them, with the vigor and mastery required for their execution. I pray you, sir, as you look upon that table, to reflect upon the size of the Grand Duchy, the aptitude of its children for the nobler development of art, the numbers devoted to its cultivation here, their pitiable poverty; and I am sure that you will deal with the wrong according to its deserts. The classic scourge of your Latin hexameters, or the English whip bequeathed you by the Dean, either of these, or both, may do somewhat, as well in your country as in mine, to check ostentatious barbarism; may show that genius and sentiment can convert all stone to precious stone; while the obscure diligence of years, uninformed by art, makes but a monument of laborious idleness." \*

Landor had indorsed this passage of the letter with a characteristic approval which its closing sentence not less deserved. It spoke of the fame which Emerson had justly won since the days in which they had met at Fiesole, and hinted at the only disadvantage under which the wealth of his genius placed him, of using often language so weighted with meaning as necessarily to express of any given thing more than he could by any possibility see in it. "Perhaps Emerson is greedy in this way sometimes, but still 'they be prave 'ords.' I am sure that the Greek statues, though they are not tormented by an ambition to say all, yet include all; and I remember having heard you remark, in my workroom, that their writers, too, were as profound in fixing the limits of their art."

Landor had also objections of his own to state to the "brave words" of the great American, when, two or three years after Greenough's letter was written, Emerson published his description of the meeting at Fiesole; and to begin with, he protested that the short conversations held at his Tuscan villa were insufficient for an estimate of his character and opinions. But one does not assume to give a man's character in putting forth a few of his sayings, although in one or two recorded by Emerson, such as the preference of Giovanni da Bologna over Michael Angelo, there was perhaps more character than either sayer or listener knew at the time. To an outbreak of spleen at a neighbor resident in Fiesole whom Landor had quarrelled with, and who claimed to be Michael Angelo's descendant, the sculptor of Bologna owed that momentary elevation. It did not last even as long as the trumpety quarrel; for Landor's heaviest blow against the offended Italian was delivered afterwards under cover of the immeasurable supremacy of his ancestor. "Deplorable," he then exclaimed, "that the inheritor of his house and name should be so vile a sycophant that even the blast of Michael's trumpet could not rouse his abject soul!" Assuredly this trumpet was not one that to Landor at any time gave an uncertain sound. He objected, now and then; I have even heard him so irreverent as to compare a famous painting in the Sistine Chapel to a prodigious gibletpie; but he never really faltered in his allegiance to the greatest master of Italian art.

\* Letter dated, "Florence, March 28th, 1851."

Another of his complaints was that Emerson should have ascribed to him the saying that the Greek historians were the only good ones. He did not think so. Davila, Macchiavelli, Voltaire, Michelet, had afforded him much instruction and much delight ; Gibbon he held to be worthy of a name among the most enlightened and eloquent of the ancients ; and he gloried in his friend and countryman William Napier, who had balanced with an equal hand Napoleon and Wellington. He claimed also not to have been so indiscriminating as Emerson supposed in his judgment of Charron. He had not compared him with Montaigne, but he had found wisdom in him, and, what was rare, sincerity. While he admitted that he did not like Mackintosh, he yet professed (with perfect truth) to be more addicted to praise than to censure ; claiming in this to be unlike the English in general, who were as fierce partisans in literary as in parliamentary elections, and as ready to cheer as to jostle a candidate of whom in actual truth they knew nothing. Of both parties in politics he had always kept himself clear, possessing votes in four counties without ever giving one ; and in the turbulent contest for literary honors he had not been less abstinent. In short (as he almost always ended such personal confessions), he had never envied any man anything but waltzing, for which he would have given all the acquirements he had ; and he had not failed in this because he was inactive, or not accurate of ear, but because he was ashamed, or rather shamefaced.

Socrates he had never undervalued. Incomparably the cleverest of all the sophists, he had turned them all into ridicule ; and for this he honored him, though as a philosopher he counted him inferior to Epicurus and Epictetus. He did not despise entomology, but was only ignorant of it ; as indeed he was of almost all science ; loving also flowers and plants, but knowing less about them than is known by a beetle or a butterfly. He had no disposition to glorify Chesterfield, though he thought him one of the best of our writers in regard to style ; but only to put in a word in defence of his *Letters*, as to which he alleged the authority of the son of Beresford, Archbishop of Tuam, for the statement that that most reverend person had placed them in the hands of his daughter. A polished courtier and a virtuous prelate knew their value ; and for his own part he thought that perhaps the neglect of them in modern days was one reason why a gentleman was become almost as rare as a man of genius.

What most had nettled him in Emerson's book, however, was not the report of any saying of his own, but a remark upon him made by Carlyle. "Landor's principle is mere rebellion." He maintained that quite the contrary was apparent and prominent in many of his writings. He had always been conservative ; but he had the eager wish, wherever evil of any kind presented itself, political, moral, or religious, to eradicate it straightway, without reference to the old blockhead cry of what was to be substituted in its place. When docks or thistles were plucked up, was any such question asked ? "I



have said plainly, more than once, and in many quarters, that I would not alter, or greatly modify, the English constitution." He had no fondness for mere innovation. Whatever is changed should rest, if possible, on what has been tried. A foundation, if ever solid, was the more solid the longer it had stood. It was because he approved of the hereditary character of the bulk of the House of Lords that he would have a better sort of life-peers introduced into it than were there at present; for he thought it the worst place in the world to put a bishop in, and would send a beadle after every overlooker that left his diocese, except on service for the head of the church, his sovereign. As to such royal service, too, when rendered by the higher nobility, he would not have them paid for it as menials are paid: he had too much respect for the order. Not that he included in this order the peerage alone. Among the country gentlemen of England were men whose ancestors were noble when the ancestors of half the peerage were nothing better than serfs.

Thus he came by degrees to the avowal of a republicanism in which he recognized authority, as opposed to that mere democracy which he admitted to be "the principle of rebellion." His views were not such as to propitiate either Carlyle or Emerson, but have an interest for us here. He did not believe that we should rest where we are; and was equally uncertain, when Enceladus should have shaken his shoulder and turned his side, whether we should then rest long. Democracy as it existed in America he declared to be his abhorrence. Lax and disjointed, it always wore out the machine. Republicanism was quite otherwise; but, alas, where did it now exist? Few had been the nations capable of receiving, fewer of retaining, that pure and efficient form. The nations on the Ebro and the mountaineers of Biscay had enjoyed it substantially for century after century. Holland, Ragusa, Genoa, Venice, had been deprived of it by that Holy Alliance whose influence had withered the Continent, and changed even the features of England. One of the worst of public calamities, in Landor's opinion, was the overthrow of the Venetian republic. Then was swept away the oldest and truest nobility in the world. "How happy were the Venetian states governed for a thousand years by the brave and intelligent gentlemen of the island city! All who did not conspire against its security were secure. Look at the palaces they erected. Look at the arts they cultivated. And look now at their damp and decaying walls." But at this point he checked himself. The disbelief he indulged, while yet resident in Italy, in all hope for Italian regeneration,\* was replaced by a better faith but a few years after his return to England; and it had become his conviction, when he thus remarked on Emerson's notices of Fiesole, that even within the damp and decaying walls of Venice lay the pledge of her ultimate restoration. "Enter: and there behold such countenances as you will never see

\* *Ante*, p. 456.

elsewhere. These are not among the creatures whom God will permit any deluge to sweep away. Heretofore a better race of beings has uniformly succeeded to a viler, though a vaster ; and it will be so again." The several races of Italians had but to compose their petty differences, quell their discordances, stand united, and strike high. *Miles, faciem feri*, he reminded them, was the cry of the wisest and most valiant of the Roman race.

All this has carried us somewhat out of date ; but the final reference I have to make to Emerson will bring us back to the exact time at which my narrative had arrived : that of Landor's closing days in Fiesole. He was not displeased that Emerson should have noted in him, at that early time, a taste for the pre-Raffaellite painters of Italy, and he described the ignorance of them among the Italians themselves to be such that he was reckoned a madman for indulging his taste. He met a tailor one day with two small canvases under his arm, and two others in his hands ; he had given a few paoli for them ; and, when offered as many francesconi for his bargain, he thought the English signor must be fairly out of his wits. "I was thought a madman, too," continued Landor, "as I sat under the shade of a vast old fig-tree, while about twenty laborers were extirpating three or four acres of vines and olives in order to make somewhat like a meadow before my windows. *Matti sono tutti gli Inglesi, ma questo poi . .* followed by a shrug and an aposiopesis."

He might so have been engaged when, in the early spring of 1834, he received a visit from another American as little famous at the time as his former American visitor had been, but reserved for a future fame altogether different from Emerson's. This was Mr. N. P. Willis, whose fuss and fury of boundless hero-worship found in Landor an easy victim. I shall make my allusion to him as brief as possible. Upon quitting Florence, after receiving much hospitality at the villa, he took with him the manuscript of a new book by Landor, which, with a letter of introduction to Lady Blessington, who had now taken up her residence in London, he was to deliver on his arrival there ; and he carried off with him at the same time not only the author's copy, interleaved and enlarged, of all the published volumes of the *Conversations*, but also the manuscript of that additional unpublished volume of which already I have described the subjects and speakers ; both being designed for publication, not in England but America. Landor's own account may be quoted. "At this time an American traveller passed through Tuscany, and favored me with a visit at my country-seat. He expressed a wish to reprint in America a large selection of my *Imaginary Conversations*, omitting the political. He assured me they were the most *thumbed* books on his table. With a smile at so energetic an expression of perhaps an undesirable distinction, I offered him unreservedly and unconditionally my only copy of the five printed volumes, interlined and interleaved in most places, which I had employed several years in improving and enlarging,



together with my manuscript of the sixth, unpublished. He wrote to me on his arrival in England, telling me that they were already on their voyage to their destination." They had sailed from Leghorn, and the sequel of their adventures will shortly be stated.

A few lines from a letter (9th June, 1834) from Lady Blessington to Landor will tell us meanwhile of the other packet also taken charge of by the traveller. "I have received your manuscript, and am delighted with it. Mr. Willis delivered it to me with your letter, and I endeavored to show him all the civility in my power, in honor of his recommendation." The manuscript was the book about Shakespeare, of which we have seen mention in the family letters from time to time, as "curious" and even "wicked"; which was published in London in the autumn of 1834; and of which some account is now due from me.

## VII. EXAMINATION OF SHAKESPEARE FOR DEER-STEALING.

The letter in the foregoing section dated at the close of January, 1835, is the last which Landor wrote to his sisters from Italy; and I have retained in it an allusion quite undeserved to a youthful criticism of mine upon the Shakespeare book, because it led to our acquaintance not many weeks after his arrival in England. The opinion then formed of that book I retain unaltered. One of the last things said to me by Charles Lamb, a week or two before his death, was that only two men could have written the *Examination of Shakespeare*, — he who wrote it, and the man it was written on; and that is exactly what I think.

Landor's first notice of it to Lady Blessington had been in a letter of the previous April, in which, after mentioning that he had for some time been composing *The Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare, Euseby Treen, Joseph Carnaby, and Silas Gough, Clerk, before the Worshipful Sir Thomas Lucy, Knight, touching Deer-Stealing on the 19th Day of September, in the Year of Grace 1582, now first published from Original Papers*, he added, "This is full of fun; I know not whether of wit. It is the only thing I ever wrote that is likely to sell." This was a hint to his friend that she was to get him some money for it, which indeed he had already promised, with unquenched ardor of hope and all his old splendor of beneficence, to a school-fellow in distress.\* But by the time Lady Blessington wrote back to him that she could by no means get money for the anonymous venture (the joke of the "original papers" turning of course on the reality of Mr. Ephraim Barnett, their editor and reporter), Landor had discovered gaming to be the cause of his school-fellow's distress, and no longer cared to get money for him. "Had he even tried but a trifle of assassination, I should have felt for him; or, in fact, had he done almost anything else. But to rely on superior skill in spoliation is

\* See *ante*, p. 302.

less pardonable than to rely on superior courage, or than to avenge an affront in a sudden and summary way." Just as content, therefore, to pay for printing as to be paid for printing, his book crept into the world unrecompensed and unannounced in the autumn of 1834.

I did my best then to draw attention to it ; but the popularity of the subject has not made it an exception to Landor's works in general, and what has been done for them remains here also necessary. I will show briefly its plan ; and very insufficiently, by such passages as can be taken without impairment of their beauty, something of its manner also. But I have no hope of conveying an approximate impression of what the book really is. Even if its richness of humor could be shown, the variety of its wit, and what it presents of a very rare union of the higher order of imagination to pathos as well as character of the simplest kind, there would be something beyond all this, untold and still to be discovered. As Marlowe defied the combined powers of the poets to do justice to the face of his mistress, for that the highest reaches of a human wit might be attained by them, and

" Yet should there hover in their restless heads  
One thought, one grace, one wonder at the best  
Which into words no virtue can digest " ;

so one finds here. There is a subtlety of genius as of beauty that escapes when we would fix the expression of any special charm ; but at least one thing can be truly said of it, that with its very grain and tissue there is interwoven a purpose profoundly human. It is a book steeped in the deepest waters of humanity. It would have been characterized as gentle when the word meant all that is noble as well as mild and wise. There has been nothing written about Shakespeare so worthy of surviving ; and whatever becomes of it now, its final place will probably be found near that loved and everlasting name.

Its plan is the simplest possible. Excepting the justice and the culprit, the only persons present at the examination are the justice's chaplain Sir Silas Gough, his clerk Mr. Ephraim Barnett who reports it, and the two countrymen who watched Shakespeare and his fellows in the forest and give evidence of the offence, Joseph Carnaby and Euseby Treen. It is an hour before noontide in the great hall at Charlecote, and the case is proceeding as an ordinary sessions matter, when suddenly, one hardly discovers how, the offence of the culprit has become nothing, and the culprit himself everything : for justice, chaplain, witnesses, reporter, all without seeming to intend it, are adding only in their several ways to the interest he has contrived to awaken ; and even the anger of the worshipful knight, which had fallen heavily on him at first for his girdings at the chaplain, only succeeds in so finding utterance as to foreshadow something humorously different. " Young man, I perceive that if I do not stop thee in thy courses, thy name, being involved in thy company's, may one



day or other reach across the county ; and folks may handle it and turn it about, as it deserveth, from Coleshill to Nuneaton, from Bromwicham to Brownsover. And who knoweth but that, years after thy death, the very house wherein thou wert born may be pointed at and commented on by knots of people, gentle and simple ! What a shame for an honest man's son ! . . . But with God's blessing the hundred shall be rid of thee, nay the whole shire. We will have none such in our county : we justices are agreed upon it, and will keep our word now and forevermore. Wee betide any that resembles thee in any part of him ! ”

Then comes the evidence ; but the witnesses have less to tell of seeing Willy in Charlecote Park helping to carry off the deer, than of hearing him with his wonderful talk frighten his companions in its moonlit glades. A few touches reproduce the scene so vividly that we seem ourselves to have part in his strange vagaries, his Windsor whimsies, his Italian girl's nursery sighs, his Pucks and pinchings, his sleep under the oaks in the ancient forest of Arden, and his waking from sleep in the *Tempest* far at sea. “Willy, Willy, prithee stop ; enough in all conscience ! ” cries the voice of one of his accomplices. “Now art thou for frightening us again out of all the senses thou hadst given us, with witches, and women more murderous than they.” “Stouter men and more resolute,” cries a deeper voice, “are few ; but thou, my lad, hast words too weighty for flesh and bones to bear up against.” Even Joseph Carnaby, awfully testifying in the justice's room to what he saw and heard by Mickle meadow as the buck was killed and carried off, looks the most guilty-like of the party. “Willy stands there,” says the recording Ephraim, “with all the courage and composure of an innocent man ; and indeed with more than what an innocent man ought to possess in the presence of a magistrate.”

Meanwhile the worshipful Sir Thomas Lucy himself is sorely at a loss for the meaning of all that honest Carnaby swears to, and still more at a loss to find a reason for his own tolerance of the slayer of his deer. “I am not ashamed,” he says aside to his chaplain, “to avouch that it goeth against me to hang this young fellow, richly as the offence in its own nature doth deserve it ; he talketh so reasonably ; not indeed so reasonably, but so like unto what a reasonable man may listen to and reflect on. There is so much too of compassion for others in hard cases, and something so very near in semblance to innocence itself in that airy swing of light-heartedness about him. I cannot fix my eyes (as one would say) on the shifting and sudden shade-and-shine, which cometh back to me, do what I will, and mazes me in a manner and blinks me.”

There are two accomplishments on which the knight prides himself above all others, his theology and his poetry ; and when half induced by the “young fellow” to think it possible that there may be theology without curses and a poem without flourishes, the entire affair be-

comes difficult to him. Nor does the submissive reverence to himself, which the lad never lays aside, make the mystery more soluble. "Alas, alas!" cries Willy, when Sir Thomas has rebuked him for calling it a south wind that blows a ship northward, "we possess not the mastery over our own weak minds when a higher spirit standeth nigh and draweth us within his influence." "Very well," cries Sir Thomas with delight, "very good, wise, discreet, judicious beyond thy years."

Here is a scrap of writing found in Willy's pockets, among sundry others of not inferior merit, and read out in the justice-room.

"THE MAID'S LAMENT.

"I loved him not; and yet now he is gone  
 I feel I am alone.  
 I checked him while he spoke; yet could he speak,  
 Alas, I would not check.  
 For reasons not to love him once I sought,  
 And wearied all my thought  
 To vex myself and him: I now would give  
 My love, could he but live  
 Who lately lived for me, and when he found  
 'T was vain, in holy ground  
 He hid his face amid the shades of death.  
 I waste for him my breath  
 Who wasted his for me: but mine returns,  
 And this lorn bosom burns  
 With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,  
 And waking me to weep  
 Tears that had melted his soft heart: for years  
 Wept he as bitter tears.  
 'Merciful God!' such was his latest prayer,  
 'These may she never share!'  
 Quieter is his breath, his breast more cold,  
 Than daisies in the mould,  
 Where children spell, athwart the churchyard gate,  
 His name and life's brief date.  
 Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you be,  
 And, O, pray too for me."

To these lines, on which a word of explanation will be suggested hereafter, Sir Thomas objects not unreasonably that the wench herself might well and truly have said all that matter without the poet, bating the rhymes and metre; and as to the metre, reproaching Willy with giving short measure in every other sack of his load, he declares he is reminded of nothing so much as badgers, a long leg on one quarter and a short leg on the other. But when his chaplain smells popery and wax candles, and says that if praying for the dead is n't popery he knows not what the devil is, his worship, who had been moved in spite of his better judgment, even comes to the rescue; by a happy emendation of the last line but one into

"Pray for our Virgin Queen, gentles, whoe'er you be,"

delivers Willy out of his popish thralldom; and while he has to confess that the poem has not a posy or ornament about it, not even a lump of sugar at the bottom of the glass, half excuses the disastrous



fact. "Of all the youths that did ever write in verse, this one verily is he who hath the fewest flowers and devices. But it would be loss of time to form a border in the fashion of a kingly crown, or a dragon or a Turk on horseback, out of buttercups and dandelions."

The chaplain now despairs of getting any good from more examination, and calls for the lad's commitment without further ado; suggesting that the sentence of death can come afterwards, and be commuted if need be. But his worship is arrested by a few words from Willy thereon, which Ephraim cannot write down without remarking that, had they been a better and nobler man's, they would deserve to have been written in letters of gold. "Worshipful sir, a word in the ear is often as good as a halter under it, and saves the groat." So the warrant of commitment is again put aside, and the lad has instead a lecture read to him upon his ill character in the county; that he is dissolute and light, much given to mummeries and mysteries, wakes and carousals, cudgel-fighters, mountebanks, and wanton women; also that it was said of him (his worship hoped *this* might be without foundation) that he enacted parts, and not simply of foresters and fairies, girls in the green-sickness and friars, lawyers and outlaws, but likewise, having small reverence for station, of kings and queens, knights and privy councillors, in all their glory. "Reason and ruminate with thyself now," he adds, as the chaplain declares folks had been consumed at the stake for pettier felonies, and Willy holds down his head; "canst thou believe it to be innocent to counterfeit kings and queens? Supposest thou that if the impression of their faces on a farthing be felonious and ropeworthy, the imitation of head and body, voice and bearing, plume and strut, crown and mantle, and everything else that maketh them royal and glorious, be aught less? Perpend, young man, perpend. Consider who among inferior mortals shall imitate them becomingly? Dreamest thou they talk and act like checkmen at Banbury fair? How can thy shallow brain suffice for their vast conceptions? How darest thou say, as they do, Hang this fellow, quarter that, flay, mutilate, stab, shoot, press, hook, torture, burn alive? *These are royalties.* Who appointed thee to such office?"

Willy has never "a word on the nail" for all this; though at the reading of another copy of verses out of his pocket, in praise of the knight and his lady, he has something to say for bringing in the great without leave, on Sir Thomas telling him he had never himself obtained his honorable dame's permission to praise her in guise of poetry: "she ought first to have been sounded; and it being certified that she disapproved not her glorification, then might it be trumpeted forth into the world below." To which the youngster replies that he doth surely imagine any honorable man (omitting to speak of ladies) would reject as a gross offence the application for permission openly to praise him, since "even to praise one's self, although it be shameful, is less shameful than to throw a burning coal into the incense-box that another doth hold to waft before us, and then to snift and simper over

it, with maidenly wishful coyness, as if forsooth one had no hand in setting it a-smoke." Whereunto Sir Thomas, out of his zeal to instruct the ignorant, makes this reply :—

"Nay, but all the great do thus. Thou must not praise them without leave and license. Praise unpermitted is plebeian praise. It is presumption to suppose that thou knowest enough of the noble and the great to discover their high qualities. They alone could manifest them unto thee. It requireth much discernment and much time to enucleate and bring into light their abstruse wisdom and gravely featured virtues. Those of ordinary men lie before thee in thy daily walks; thou mayest know them by converse at their tables, as thou knowest the little tame squirrel that chippeth his nuts in the open sunshine of a bowling-green. But beware how thou enterest the awful arbors of the great, who conceal their magnanimity in the depths of their hearts, as lions do."

More surprising to the erudite magistrate however than even the young lad's dabbings in poetry are the scraps he repeats of sermons heard by him at St. Mary's, Oxford, when visiting the city on his father's business. The preacher is a learned Doctor Glaston, who had been attracted to the stranger youth in church; and had carried him away from the temptation of the Mitre to pass the day in his rooms, even before he inquired his name. "William Shakespeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, at your service, sir."

"'And welcome,' said he; 'thy father erenow hath bought our college wool. A truly good man we ever found him; and I doubt not he hath educated his son to follow him in his paths. There is in the blood of man, as in the blood of animals, that which giveth the temper and disposition. These require nurture and culture. But what nurture will turn flint-stones into garden mould? or what culture rear cabbages in the quarries of Hedington Hill? To be well born is the greatest of all God's primary blessings, young man, and there are many well born among the poor and needy. Thou art not of the indigent and destitute, who have great temptations; thou art not of the wealthy and affluent, who have greater still. God hath placed thee, William Shakespeare, in that pleasant island, on one side whereof are the syrens, on the other the harpies, but inhabiting the coasts on the wider continent, and unable to make their talons felt or their voices heard by thee. Unite with me in prayer and thanksgiving for the blessings thus vouchsafed. We must not close the heart when the finger of God would touch it. Enough if thou sayest only, 'My soul, praise thou the Lord.'"

On which Sir Thomas, his chaplain remaining mute, cries Amen, much to the discomfiture of the holy man, who remarks that he can say Amen too "in the proper place." But once fairly under way with what he pretends to have noted down from the discourses of Doctor Glaston, and Willy has his own way with Justice Lucy. The knight misses authority now and then, wants something doctrinal, has a longing for a thread or two from coats of the fathers, hankers after the perfume of a sprig from Basil, or is thirsty for a smack of Augustin, but for the most part is lying back in his chair in his easiest attitude, opening his ears to their widest stretch, and telling Willy to go on with his sermons. And Willy goes on so eagerly, pouring out under Doctor



Glaston's name such a rapture of religious exhortation in language so unknown to any school of divinity, that Sir Thomas, finding the apostles as well as the fathers borne away from him on that stream of poetry and eloquence, of imagination, reason, and wit, is fain at last to save his own orthodoxy by putting in a word for form's sake. "Reasonable enough," he murmurs, "nay, almost too reasonable; but where are the apostles, where are the disciples, where are the saints, where is hell-fire? Well, well," as he again falls back with unabated enjoyment, "patience, we may come to it yet. Go on, Will." Will now, in short, has entirely the upper hand of Sir Thomas; the young poacher leads the justice by all his senses, ears, eyes, and nose; and "honest" Willy is the epithet at last applied to him. "Such was the very word," says Mr. Ephraim Barnett, who for the moment fancies his own ears are deceiving him.

A sad defalcation all this of the allegiance due to fathers and doctors from a justice of peace and quorum; and though to see the light that led astray might suggest some forgiveness, it is difficult to show it by selections. Profuse as are the striking thoughts and images in the book, and wonderful everywhere the fitness and felicity of its style, its higher wealth of imagination and wit is inseparable from the subtlety of its art and design. The book fades as only the good things of its author appear; but, taken each at its own worth, how masterly they are! And what are we to say of a writer from whom such things drop so abundantly on any subject that engages him, but that, however distant be his full inheritance of fame, he can afford to wait the time.

#### THE TWO BESETTING SINS.

"Lust seizeth us in youth, ambition in mid-life, avarice in old age; but vanity and pride are the besetting sins that drive the angels from our cradle, pamper us with luscious and most unwholesome food, ride our first stick with us, mount our first horse with us, wake with us in the morning, dream with us in the night, and never at any time abandon us. In this world, beginning with pride and vanity, we are delivered over from tormentor to tormentor, until the worst tormentor of all taketh absolute possession of us forever. . . . William, William, there is in the moral straits a current from right to wrong, but no reflux from wrong to right; for which destination we must hoist our sails aloft and ply our oars incessantly, or night and the tempest will overtake us, and we shall shriek out in vain from the billows, and irrecoverably sink."

#### TO THE YOUNG, RICH AND POOR.

"Young gentlemen, let not the highest of you who hear me this evening be led into the delusion, for such it is, that the founder of his family was *originally* a greater or a better man than the lowest here. He willed it, and became it. He must have stood low; he must have worked hard; and with tools moreover of his own invention and fashioning. He waved and whistled off ten thousand strong and importunate temptations; he dashed the dice-box from the jewelled hand of Chance, the cup from Pleasure's, and trod under foot the sorceries of each; he ascended steadily

the precipices of Danger, and looked down with intrepidity from the summit; he overawed Arrogance with Sedateness; he seized by the horn and overleaped low Violence; and he fairly swung Fortune round. The very high cannot rise much higher; the very low may; the truly great must have done it. This is not the doctrine, my friends, of the silkenly and lawnlly religious; it wears the coarse texture of the fisherman, and walks uprightly and straightforward under it. . . . Hardly any man is ashamed of being inferior to his ancestors, although it is the very thing at which the great should blush, if indeed the great in general descended from the worthy. . . . He alone who maketh you wiser maketh you greater; and it is only by such an implement that Almighty God himself effects it. When he taketh away a man's wisdom, he taketh away his strength, his power over others and over himself. What help for him then? He may sit idly and swell his spleen, saying, 'Who is this? Who is that?' and at the question's end the spirit of inquiry dies away in him. It would not have been so, if, in happier hour, he had said within himself 'Who am I? What am I?' and had prosecuted the search in good earnest."

#### DOCTOR GLASTON ON THE GREEKS AND ROMANS.

"The Greeks conveyed all their wisdom into their theatre; their stages were churches and parliament houses. . . . William, I need not expatiate on Greek with thee, since thou knowest it not, but some crumbs of Latin are picked up by the callowest beaks. The Romans had, as thou findest, and have still, more taste for murder than morality, and, as they could not find heroes among them, looked for gladiators. Their only very high poet employed his elevation and strength to dethrone and debase the Deity. They had several others, who polished their language and pitched their instruments with admirable skill: several who glued over their thin and flimsy gaberdines many bright feathers from the wide-spread downs of Ionia, and the richly cultivated rocks of Attica. . . . William, that which moveth the heart most is the best poetry; it comes nearest unto God, the source of all power."

#### SIR THOMAS LUCY'S COMMENT THEREON.

"Those ancients have little flesh upon the body poetical, and lack the savor that sufficeth. The Song of Solomon drowns all their voices: they seem but whistlers and guitar-players compared to a full-cheeked trumpeter; they standing under the eaves in some dark lane, he upon a well-caparisoned stallion, tossing his mane and all his ribands to the sun. I doubt the doctor spake too fondly of the Greeks: they were giddy creatures. William, I am loath to be hard on them; but they please me not. There are those now living who could make them bite their nails to the quick, and turn green as grass with envy."

#### DOING GOOD BY SPEAKING IT.

"Never hold me unjust, sir knight, to Master Silas. Could I learn other good of him, I would freely say it; for we do good by speaking it, and none is easier. Even bad men are not bad men while they praise the just."

#### BEECH-WOOD AND GOOSE-FEATHERS.

"He had ridden hard that morning, and had no cushion upon his seat as Sir Thomas had; and I have seen, in my time, that he who is seated on



beech-wood hath very different thoughts and moralities from him who is seated on goose-feathers under doeskin."

#### RICHES OF OUR DAILY SPEECH.

"How many of our words have more in them than we think of! Give a countryman a plough of silver, and he will plough with it all the season, and never know its substance. 'Tis thus with our daily speech. What riches lie hidden in the vulgar tongue of the poorest and most ignorant! What flowers of Paradise lie under our feet, with their beauties and parts undistinguished and undiscerned, from having been daily trodden on!"

#### THE NECESSITY OF PRAISE TO THE POET.

"Praise giveth weight unto the wanting, and happiness giveth elasticity unto the heavy. As the mightier streams of the unexplored world, America, run languidly in the night, and await the sun on high to contend with him in strength and grandeur, so doth genius halt and pause in the thralldom of outspread darkness, and move onwards with all his vigor then only when creative light and jubilant warmth surround him."

That last is from the episode of Ethelbert. Among Dr. Glaston's students Willy Shakespeare had especially noticed one whose pale face, abstinence at table, cough, taciturnity, and gentleness seemed already to declare him more than half a poet; and he had been struck by the arguments employed by the doctor to dissuade him from the poet's vocation. Such is their lofty tone that they have the effect of inviting even while they dissuade; and a something of doubt seems at last to arise also in the doctor himself, as he glances from Ethelbert to Shakespeare, and gets a hint from the light-hearted lad that peradventure poetry may be safely followed after all, provided only that to the poet himself it be but a pastime and pleasure.

"The things whereon thy whole soul brooded in its innermost recesses, and with all its warmth and energy, will pass unprized and unregarded, not only throughout thy lifetime, but long after. For the higher beauties of poetry are beyond the capacity, beyond the vision, of almost all. Once perhaps in half a century a single star is discovered, then named and registered, then mentioned by five studious men to five more; at last some twenty say, or repeat in writing, what they have heard about it. Other stars await other discoveries. Few and solitary and wide asunder are those who calculate their relative distances, their mysterious influences, their glorious magnitude, and their stupendous height. 'Tis so, believe me, and ever was so, with the truest and best poetry. Homer, they say, was blind; he might have been ere he died; that he sat among the blind, we are sure. Happy they who, like this young lad from Stratford, write poetry on the saddle-bow when their geldings are jaded, and keep the desk for better purposes."

On this everybody present turns to the wool-stapler's son, and there is plenty of sneer and scoff at his cost; but Ethelbert, sparing him, only smiles and says:—

"Be patient: from the higher heavens of poetry it is long before the radiance of the brightest star can reach the world below. We hear that

one man finds out one beauty, another man finds out another, placing his observatory and instruments on the poet's grave. The worms must have eaten us before it is rightly known what we are. It is only when we are skeletons that we are boxed and ticketed, and prized and shown. Be it so. I shall not be tired of waiting."

Connected also with Ethelbert is a little story told him by Doctor Glaston of a ripe and promising scholar at St. John's before whom a great career lay open, but who, suffering himself to be broken in spirit by an unfortunate passion, had fled to poetry from severer toil, and was found by the doctor himself one day on the banks of the Cherwell, "thought to have died broken-hearted." What follows is supremely pathetic. In its pure and simple form this is the most arduous achievement of writing; and though in pathos no literature is so rich as the English, there is in the range of the language little that goes beyond this.

"Remembering that his mother did abide one mile farther on, I walked forward to the mansion and asked her what tidings she lately had received of her son. She replied, that having given up his mind to light studies, the fellows of the college would not elect him. . . . 'I rated him, told him I was poor, and he knew it. He was stung, and threw himself upon my neck and wept. Twelve days have passed since, and only three rainy ones. I hear he has been seen upon the knoll yonder, but hither he hath not come. I trust he knows at last the value of time, and I shall be heartily glad to see him after this accession of knowledge. Twelve days, it is true, are rather a chink than a gap in time; yet, O gentle sir, they are that chink which makes the vase quite valueless. There are light words which may never be shaken off the mind they fall on. My child, who was hurt by me, will not let me see the marks.' 'Lady,' said I, 'none are left upon him. Be comforted. Thou shalt see him this hour. All that thy God hath not taken is yet thine.' She looked at me earnestly, and would have then asked something, but her voice failed her. There was no agony, no motion, save in the lips and cheeks. Being the widow of one who fought under Hawkins, she remembered his courage and sustained the shock, saying calmly, 'God's will be done. I pray that he find me as worthy as he findeth me willing to join them.' Now in her unearthly thoughts she had led her only son to the bosom of her husband; and in her spirit (which often is permitted to pass the gates of death with holy love) she left them both with their Creator. The curate of the village sent those who should bring home the body; and some days afterwards he came unto me, beseeching me to write the epitaph. Being no friend to stone-cutters' charges, I entered not into biography, but wrote these few words:—

JOANNES WELLERBY  
LITERARUM QUÆSIVIT GLORIAM,  
VIDET DEI."

In the verse before quoted as the Maid's Lament, from the scrap discovered in the young poacher's pocket, the sequel of the tale is told according to Willy's sense of retributive justice. Such connection of it with the story is not named, but very manifest.

Here we may shut the book. What turn the examination took finally, it does not need to say. Mr. Barnett can only explain the



miracle of Master Willy's closing familiarity with Sir Thomas by remarking that great poets do mightily affect to have little poets under them, and little poets do forget themselves in great company. Unhappily just at the last a note of discord is struck by the introduction of the name of one Hannah Hathaway; and as Sir Thomas sees the lad bound out of his hall and thread the trees along his park like a greyhound-whelp after a leveret, he can but cry alack and well-a-day, that a respectable wool-stapler's son should turn gypsy and poet for life!

Another glimpse of him is nevertheless given us in a memorandum written seventeen years later by the reporter of the examination, who at this date appends to it, upon the relation of a kinsman who is one of the retainers of the Earl of Essex, not only a conference on the condition of Ireland between the earl and Master Edmund Spenser, which by the earl's order he had taken down, but also an account of the burial of Master Edmund shortly afterwards in Westminster Abbey when Master Shakespeare himself attended. Ephraim's kinsman thus writes to him.

"Now I speak of poets, you will be in a maze at hearing that our townsman hath written a power of matter for the playhouse. Neither he nor the booksellers think it quite good enough to print; but I do assure you, on the faith of a Christian, it is not bad; and there is rare fun in the last thing of his about Venus, where a Jew, one Shiloh, is choused out of his money and his revenge. However, the best critics and the greatest lords find fault, and very justly, in the words:—

"'Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is?'

Surely this is very unchristianlike. Nay, for supposition sake, suppose it to be true, was it his business to tell the people so? Was it his duty to ring the crier's bell and cry to them, 'The sorry Jews are quite as much men as you are'? The church luckily has let him alone for the present; and the queen winks upon it. The best defence he can make for himself is, that it comes from the mouth of a Jew, who says many other things as abominable. Master Greene may overrate him; but Master Greene declares that if William goes on improving and taking his advice, it will be desperate hard work in another seven years to find so many as half a dozen chaps equal to him within the liberties."

As delightfully sketched is the scene at Spenser's burial, and there is nothing in the *Conversations* more beautiful than the Conference of Essex and Spenser. The time is immediately after that Irish rebellion in which Spenser's house, his infant child being in it, had been burnt to the ground; and Essex, believing that only his house had perished, and questioning him as of an ordinary sorrow, adds to even the dreadfulfulness of what waits to be disclosed by previous touches of half-playful raillery. Was his house indeed so dear to him? It was indeed, is Spenser's answer. "Innocent hopes were my gravest cares,

and my playfullest fancy was with kindly wishes. Ah, surely of all cruelties the worst is to extinguish our kindness. Mine is gone : I love the people and the land no longer. My lord, ask me not about them ; I may speak injuriously." Essex still cannot guess the grief which no council, no queen, no Essex can repair ; but he sees that it is grave, and respects it. "Nay, kiss not my hand : he whom God smiteth hath God with him. In his presence what am I ?" That Spenser's grief is for the death of some one dear to him, Essex knows now, yet still talks to him cheerily of endurance and hopefulness, for that every day, every hour of the year, there are hundreds mourning what he mourns. "O no, no, no !" cries the other. "Calamities there are around us ; calamities there are all over the earth ; calamities there are in all seasons ; but none in any season, none in any place like mine." "So," rejoins Essex, "say all fathers, so say all husbands. Look at any old mansion-house, and let the sun shine as gloriously as it may on the golden vanes, or the arms recently quartered over the gateway, or the embayed window, and on the happy pair that haply is toying at it ; nevertheless thou mayest say that of a certainty the same fabric hath seen much sorrow within its chambers, and heard many wailings : and each time this was the heaviest stroke of all. Funerals have passed along through the stout-hearted knights upon the wainscot, and amid the laughing nymphs upon the arras. Old servants have shaken their heads, as if somebody had deceived them, when they found that beauty and nobility could perish. Edmund, the things that are too true pass by us as if they were not true at all ; and when they have singled us out, then only do they strike us." Supremely beautiful, surely ; yet the passion that bursts forth when all the truth is told very far transcends it. But this must be read in the Conference itself.

Landor justly valued it, and was in great alarm on hearing from England that the friends who had charge of the printing could not understand why the same volume should contain both it and the Examination. Expressly for this, he wrote to Lady Blessington (11th October, 1834) : "I have written an Introduction which quite satisfied me ; which hardly anything does upon the whole, though everything in part. Pray relieve me, then, from this teasing anxiety, for the Examination and the Conference if disjoined would break my heart." He had his wish ; yet wellnigh broke his heart notwithstanding, on seeing the printed book. "I hope," he wrote to Southey, "my publisher sent you the *Examination of Shakespeare*, — alas that I should say it ! the very worst printed book that ever fell into my hands. 'Volubly discreet' ! 'slipped into' for 'stripped unto' ! 'Sit mute' for 'stand,' with many, many others ! And then there are words I never use, such as 'utmost' ; I always write 'uttermost.' In fact the misprints amount to forty of the grosser kind, and I know not how many of the smaller !" He added that if a friendly report of the thing (my notice of it) had not put him in good-humor



before it reached him, he would have flung it into the fire then and there, and dismissed it from his thoughts forever.

The friendly report had outstripped the volume in Florence by some days, and when the single copy afterwards arrived he had to lend it round to all his circle. He carefully kept the little notes from successive applicants for the loan, among them Milnes, Brown, Leckie, Kirkup, and the novelist Mr. James, also for the time his neighbor; and the flutter of pleasure and praise among them had been not without pleasure for himself, and a flutter of encouragement too. "I did not believe such kind things would be said of me for at least a century to come." The effect survived even the less hopeful side of the picture; and when Crabb Robinson wrote from London (10th February, 1835), that the Shakespeare book would have fallen dead-born but for one review, that, though this had proclaimed its beauties, others had found it unintelligible, and that a paper of high character had thrust it aside as "a mere silly imitation of obsolete law proceedings and phrases," Landor only replied to this part of the letter, that he was busy with something else which he hoped might have better fortune.

The "something else" was *Pericles and Aspasia*, also written for the most part in this last year of residence in Italy, which it helps to make memorable.

### VIII. PERICLES AND ASPASIA.

#### LANDOR TO SOUTHEY (early in 1835).

"Since we met, since indeed we wrote, many things have occurred in your family on which I wish it were my good fortune to offer you only my congratulations. But grief is as pure an offering, and far more costly. I need not tell you that I have grieved, and not for an hour or two, at your afflictions. Nor did it satisfy my mind, nor can it yours, that you still have more reason for contentment, and higher sources both of consolation and delight, than any man upon earth. The human heart was never made for listening, and even this truth will find but tardy admittance into yours. I am so disgusted with politics and politicians that I never read a newspaper, but I hear that some respect has been shown to the services you have rendered the country by your writings. Poor Coleridge has not lived for the restoration of what was taken from him. I wish he had indulged less in metaphysics. Had I seen him a second time, I would have asked him whether the principal merit of the Germans does not consist in nomenclature and arrangement. Strongly do I imagine to myself that I have seen all their new truths, as they call them, in old authors. Of the moderns, as far as I can judge (for such reading tires me like walking knee-deep in sawdust), Hobbes is the most acute, and Locke the most logical. My friend Mr. Robinson has not told me whether Charles Lamb has left any writings behind him. Nothing can be more delightful than the *Essays of Elia*; and his sister's style is perfect. I have read *Mrs. Leicester's School* four times, and each time with equal if not fresh delight. She is now far advanced in years, and no friend can be in the place of a brother to her. He was a most affectionate creature, pleasurable and even-tempered. Him

too I saw but once, and yet I think of him as if I had known him forty years.

Once, and once only, have I seen thy face,  
 Elia! once only has thy tripping tongue  
 Run o'er my breast, yet never has been left  
 Impression on it stronger or more sweet.  
 Cordial old man! what youth was in thy years,  
 What wisdom in thy levity, what truth  
 In every utterance of that purest soul!  
 Few are the spirits of the glorified  
 I'd spring to earlier at the gate of Heaven.

Is there anything yet left upon the earth? or is there only a void space between you and me? . . . I hear you are writing a History of the Moors. Surely there must be valuable manuscripts in Fez and Morocco, perhaps too in Madrid. Have you ever heard that the library of the Greek Emperors is still preserved in the Seraglio? I do not trouble my head about Menander, poor Parr's regret; for, if he were only worth two Terences, he was only worth three farthings; but I would gladly see a volume of Simonides, and anything beyond the few words that Thucydides has given us of Pericles. I began a conversation between Pericles and Aspasia, and thought I could do better by a series of letters between them, not uninterrupted; for the letters should begin with their first friendship, should give place to their conversations afterwards, and recommence on their supposed separation during the plague of Athens. Few materials are extant: Bayle, Menage, Thucydides, Plutarch, and hardly anything more. So much the better. The coast is clear: there are neither rocks nor weeds before me. But I am writing as if I had not torn to pieces all their love-letters and orations! Few were completed."

So Landor wrote in the letter, the last addressed to his friend from Italy, which Mr. Milnes brought over as an introduction to the poet laureate. But even while he wrote, the subject of Pericles had recast itself in his mind; in the few more months that remained to him at the villa Gherardescha, it was brought nearly to completion; and though, having carried the manuscript to England in the December of 1835, it was published while he resided there, it is to Italy the book belongs. Here therefore, in the same manner and for the same reason as in his former books, I proceed to give account of it.

The first notion mentioned to Southey, of including conversations in his plan, was thrown over afterwards; and he restricted himself to a series of imaginary letters, opening at the arrival of Aspasia in Athens from her native Miletus, and closing at the death of Pericles in the third year of the Peloponnesian war. He interspersed occasional speeches; and relieved his theme, which he also adorns and illustrates, by a variety of fragments of verse the most thoroughly Greek that any Englishman has written. It was a daring choice to select a time which within the compass of a single life took in the lives of the foremost of the ancient poets, philosophers, historians, and men of action, by whom humanity and the human race have been exalted; and it was trebly daring to advance to such a task, trusting solely to the force of his genius and unassisted but by the



treasures of his memory. "In writing my *Pericles and Aspasia*," he says, in a letter of the 27th April, 1836, "I had no books to consult. The characters, thoughts, and actions are all fictions. Pericles was somewhat less amiable, Aspasia somewhat less virtuous, Alcibiades somewhat less sensitive; but here I could represent him so, being young, and before his character was displayed." Besides these, his only leading persons are Aspasia's friend and countrywoman Cleone, and the philosopher Anaxagoras; the figures in his foreground being wisely few, but their grouping and accessories such as to surround with all the greatness of their age his hero and heroine, who vie with each other in appreciation of the genius that is present with them, and in their knowledge of the glories of the past. There are several exquisite episodes; and that of Xenocrates of Miletus, the rejected lover of Aspasia, himself as vainly beloved by Cleone, invests the latter with a softness and grace hardly second to Aspasia's own. These two women fill the book to overflowing with sensibility and tenderness, insomuch that one of Landor's American admirers\* has singled it out as in this respect pre-eminent over all his writings, "a book that we are frequently forced to drop, and surrender ourselves to the visions and memories, soft or sad, which its words awaken, and cause to pass before the mind." Yet a book also that perfectly sustains the interest which it vividly awakens. Not mean is the exploit when a writer can satisfy the most exacting scholarship while he revives the forms or imitates the language of antiquity. But here we have something more, resembling rather antiquity itself than the most scholarly and successful presentation of it. We are in the theatre when *Prometheus* is played; we are in the house of Aspasia when Socrates and Aristophanes are there; Thucydides is shown to us in the promise of his youth; we see the last of the triumphs of Sophocles; and in speeches and letters of Pericles upon the great affairs he is conducting, history acts herself again. The political antagonism of Cimon, and the War with its sad disasters, usher in the mournful close. Amid the horrors of the plague the farewell to Athens and Aspasia is written; and over a sun that is grandly setting the fiery star of Alcibiades is seen to rise. A magnificent subject very nobly handled. Landor had chosen for trial the bow of Ulysses, and it obeyed his hand.

Something to show manner and treatment must be added, but it will not express the charm that overspreads the book as with a wide and sunny atmosphere of clear bright air. It is only to be understood from reading it how intensely Greek the mind of Landor was. Here his faults became beauties. What one inclines to object to very often in his writing, that his characters make too little allowance for human passions, that they leave too little room for what in mechanics is called friction, that, as during all his own life their inventor and

\* My old friend Mr. Hillard of Boston, who published in that city a dozen years ago a volume of "Selections from Landor."

maker was apt to do, they too much believe what they wish, and too readily suppose to be practicable what appears to be desirable, is no objection here. What we forever associate with the Greeks, of buoyant grace, elaborate refinement, precision of form, and imagination more sensuous and fanciful than sentimental or spiritual, we shall always find in most perfect expression where the impulsive predominates over the reflective part of the mind. It is a small thing to add for an illustration, but there are two or three lines in the first letter that exhibit what I say of the Greek spirit showing itself in the very lightest touch, where Aspasia, after reaching Athens, describes to Cleone the olive-tree itself as looking beautiful "when the sea-breezes blow. It looks, in its pliable and undulating branches, irresolute as Ariadne when she was urged to fly, and pale as Orythia when she was borne away."

The book really opens at a performance of *Prometheus* in the Athenian theatre, to which, through the assembled crowd of youths, philosophers, magistrates, and generals, Aspasia in the dress of a boy has made her way alone; when with such painful force are her sympathies affected by the actors in the scene, by the champion of the human race, by his antagonist Jove and his creator Æschylus, that she sinks from her seat. "He had resisted in silence and disdain the cruellest tortures that Almightyness could inflict; and now arose the nymphs of Ocean, which heaved its vast waves before us; and now they descended with open arms and sweet benign countenances, and spake with pity; and the insurgent heart was mollified and quelled. I sobbed; I dropt." As many eyes had been directed to her meanwhile as to the competitor of the gods, and the purpose for which she had left her native Miletus was already wellnigh accomplished. She is conducted to the presence of Pericles.

By any one desirous of knowing the heights to which criticism might ascend, if with elevated purpose practised as an art and not indiscriminately used as a dagger or daubing-brush, that description of the performance of *Prometheus* would be well worth study. But nothing great is criticised in this book without receiving from what is said of it new celebrity and charm, and upon nothing little is anger thrown needlessly away. In the passages I am about to give it will be also seen that the mind of Landor was not more Greek than his style was English, and that this here is at its very best; perfect in form, solid in substance, in expression always concise and pure, and often piercing and radiant as light itself. It was said of the book by one who was herself a fine Greek scholar (Miss Barrett: 21 August, 1839), that if he had written only this, it would have shown him to be "of all living writers the most unconventional in thought and word, the most classical, because the freest from mere classicalism, the most Greek, because pre-eminently and purely English, and the fittest of all to achieve what Plato calls a triumph in eloquence, the successful commendation of Athens in the midst of the Peloponnesus."



## PERICLES ON HOMER.

"Some tell us that there were twenty Homers, some deny that there was ever one. We are perpetually laboring to destroy our delight, our composure, our devotion to superior power. Of all the animals upon earth we least know what is good for us. My opinion is, that what is best for us is our admiration of good. No man living venerates Homer more than I do. He was the only author I read when a boy. . . . He then nourished my fancy, animated my dreams, awoke me in the morning, marched with me, sailed with me, taught me morals, taught me language, taught me music and philosophy and war. . . . His beautiful creation lies displayed before us; the creator is hidden in his own splendor. I can more easily believe that his hand constructed the whole than that twenty men could be found, at nearly the same time, each of genius sufficient for the twentieth part; because in many centuries there arose not a single one capable of such a production as that portion."

## HOMER LIKELY TO REMAIN UNKNOWN.

"The heavenly bodies may keep their secrets two or three thousand years yet; but one or other will betray them to some wakeful favorite, some Endymion beyond Latmos, perhaps in regions undiscovered, certainly in uncalculated times. Men will know more of them than they will ever know of Homer. Our knowledge on this miracle of our species is unlikely to increase."

## HESIOD AND HOMER.

"Hesiod, who is also a Boeotian, is admirable for the purity of his life and soundness of his precepts, but there is hardly a trace of poetry in his ploughed field. I find in all his writings but one verse worth transcribing, and that only for the melody:—

'In a soft meadow and on vernal flowers.'

I do not wonder he was opposed to Homer. What an advantage to the enemies of greatness (that is, to mankind) to be able to match one so low against one so lofty!"

## ARISTOPHANES.

"Aristophanes, in my opinion, might have easily been the first lyric poet now living, except Sophocles and Euripides; he chose rather to be the bitterest satirist. How many, adorned with all the rarities of intellect, have stumbled on the entrance into life, and have made a wrong choice on the very thing which was to determine their course forever! This is among the reasons, and perhaps is the principal one, why the wise and the happy are two distinct classes of men."

## SAPPHO AND THE TRAGEDIANS.

"Her finest ode is not to be compared to many choruses in the tragedians. We know that Sappho felt acutely; yet Sappho is never pathetic. Euripides and Sophocles are not remarkable for the purity, the intensity, or the fidelity of their loves, yet they touch, they transfix the heart. Her imagination, her whole soul, is absorbed in her own breast: *she* is the prey of the passions; *they* are the lords and masters."

## THE PROMETHEUS AND THE ILIAD.

"I agree with you that the conception of such a drama is in itself a stupendous effort of genius; that the execution is equal to the conception; that the character of Prometheus is more heroic than any in heroic poetry; and that no production of the same extent is so magnificent and so exalted. But the Iliad is not a region,—it is a continent; and you might as well compare this prodigy to it as the cataract of the Nile to the Ocean. In the one we are overpowered by the compression and burst of the element; in the other we are carried over an immensity of space, bounding the earth, not bounded by her, and having nothing above but the heavens."

## PERICLES ON HIS LIBELLERS.

"Why should I be angry with the writers of comedy? Is it because they tell me of the faults I find in myself? Surely not, for he who finds them in himself may be quite certain that others have found them in him long before, and have shown forbearance in the delay. Is it because I am told of those I have not discovered in me? Foolish indeed were this. I am to be angry, it seems, because a man forewarns me that I have enemies in my chamber, who will stab me when they find me asleep, and because he helps me to catch them and disarm them. But it is such an indignity to be ridiculed! I incurred a greater when I threw myself into the way of ridicule: a greater still should I suffer, if I tried whether it could be remedied by resentment. Ridicule often parries resentment, but resentment never yet parried ridicule."

## LITTLE POETS.

"He is among the many poets who never make us laugh or weep; among the many whom we take into the hand like pretty insects, turn them over, look at them for a moment, and toss them into the grass again. The earth swarms with these; they live their season, and others similar come into life the next."

## SCULPTURE, PAINTING, AND POETRY.

"Painting by degrees will perceive her advantages over Sculpture; but if there are paces between Sculpture and Painting, there are parasangs between Painting and Poetry. The difference is that of a lake confined by mountains, and a river running on through all the varieties of scenery, perpetual and unimpeded. Sculpture and Painting are moments of life; Poetry is life itself, and everything around it and above it."

## LIFE.

"It is a casket not precious in itself, but valuable in proportion to what fortune, or industry, or virtue, has placed within it."

## TRUE LOVE.

"At last, Aspasia, you love indeed. The perfections of your beloved interest you less than the imperfections, which you no sooner take up for reprehension, than you admire, embrace, and defend. Happy, happy Aspasia!"

## LITTLE AGLAE

*To her Father, on her Statue being called like her.*

"Father, the little girl we see  
Is not, I fancy, so like me;  
You never hold her on your knee.



When she came home the other day  
 You kissed her; but I cannot say  
 She kissed you first and ran away."

#### ASPASIA ON HER NURSE'S DEATH.

"Ah poor Demophile, she remembered me, then! How sorry I am I cannot tell her I remember her! Cleone, there are little things that leave no little regrets. I might have said kind words, and perhaps have done kind actions, to many who now are beyond the reach of them."

#### A PHILOSOPHER'S JUDGMENT OF PERICLES.

"Much is wanting to constitute his greatness. He possesses, it is true, more comprehensiveness and concentration than any living; perhaps more than any since Solon; but he thinks that power over others is better than power over himself; as if a mob were worth a man, and an acclamation were worth a Pericles."

#### ANAXAGORAS IN AGE AND EXILE.

"Believe me, I am happy. . . . I am with you still; I study with you, just as before, although nobody talks aloud in the school-room. This is the pleasantest part of life. Oblivion throws her light coverlet over our infancy; and soon after we are out of the cradle we forget how soundly we had been slumbering, and how delightful were our dreams. Toil and pleasure contend for us almost the instant we rise from it; and weariness follows whichever has carried us away. We stop awhile, look around us, wonder to find we have completed the circle of existence, fold our arms, and fall asleep again."

#### ADVICE ON THE WRITING OF HISTORY.

"We are growing too loquacious both on the stage and off. We make disquisitions which render us only more and more dim-sighted, and excursions that only consume our stores. . . . The field of history should not merely be well tilled, but well peopled. None is delightful to me, or interesting, in which I find not as many illustrious names as have a right to enter it. We might as well in a drama place the actors behind the scenes, and listen to the dialogue there, as in a history push valiant men back, and protrude ourselves with husky disputations. Show me rather how great projects were executed, great advantages gained, and great calamities averted. Show me the generals and the statesmen who stood foremost, that I may bend to them in reverence; tell me their names, that I may repeat them to my children. Teach me whence laws were introduced, upon what foundation laid, by what custody guarded, in what inner keep preserved. Let the books of the treasury lie closed as religiously as the Sibyl's; leave weights and measures in the market-place, Commerce in the harbor, the Arts in the light they love, Philosophy in the shade; place History on her rightful throne, and at the sides of her Eloquence and War."

#### THE TROJAN WAR AND OTHER HISTORIC MYTHS.

"We make a bad bargain when we change poetry for truth in the affairs of ancient times, and by no means a good one in any. Remarkable men of remote ages are collected together out of different countries within the same period, and perform simultaneously the same action. On an accumulation

of obscure deeds arises a wild spirit of poetry ; and images and names burst forth and spread themselves, which carry with them something like enchantment, far beyond the infancy of nations. What was vague imagination settles at last and is received for history. It is difficult to effect and idle to attempt the separation : it is like breaking off a beautiful crystallization from the vault of some intricate and twilight cavern, out of mere curiosity to see where the secretion terminates and the rock begins."

#### VERSES BY A PHILOSOPHER.

"Pleasures! away; they please no more.  
Friends! are they what they were before?  
Loves! they are very idle things,  
The best about them are their wings.  
The dance! 't is what a bear can do.  
Music! I hate your music too.  
Whene'er these witnesses that time  
Hath snatcht the chaplet from our prime  
Are called by Nature, as we go  
With eye more wary, step more slow,  
And will be heard and noted down,  
However we may fret and frown,—  
Shall we desire to leave the scene  
Where all our former joys had been?  
No, 't were ungrateful and unwise!  
But when die down our charities  
For human weal and human woes,  
Then is the time our eyes should close."

#### THE OTHER SIDE TO THE "SI VIS ME FLERE."

"Homer, in himself, is subject to none of the passions; but he sends them all forth on his errands, with as much precision and velocity as Apollo his golden arrows. The hostile Gods, the very Fates themselves, must have wept with Priam in the tent before Achilles: Homer stands unmoved."

#### TRUE WIFE.

"If he loves me, the merit is not mine; the fault will be, if he ceases."

#### LOVE.

"Like the ocean, love embraces the earth; and by love, as by the ocean, whatever is sordid and unsound is borne away."

#### ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

"The largest heart, O Cleone, is that which only one can rest upon or impress; the purest is that which dares to call itself impure; the kindest is that which shrinks rather at his own inhumanity than at another's."

#### PRIDE AND DELICACY.

"There are proud men of so much delicacy that it almost conceals their pride, and perfectly excuses it."

#### REALLY RESTLESS MEN.

"I do believe, Aspasia, that studious men who look so quiet are the most restless men in existence."



## CAUTION FROM A PHILOSOPHER.

"Be cautious, O Aspasia, of discoursing on philosophy. Is it not in philosophy as in love? the more we have of it, and the less we talk about it, the better."

## STUDY.

"Study is the bane of boyhood, the aliment of youth, the indulgence of manhood, and the restorative of age."

## YOUTH.

"There is something like enchantment in the very sound of the word *youth*, and the calmest heart, at every season of life, beats in double time to it."

## MONUMENTS.

"The monument of the greatest man should be only a bust and a name. If the name alone is insufficient to illustrate the bust, let them both perish."

## TEARS.

"Tears, O Aspasia, do not dwell long upon the cheeks of youth. Rain drops easily from the bud, rests on the bosom of the maturer flower, and breaks down that one only which hath lived its day."

## DEATHS OF FRIENDS.

"We both are young; and yet we have seen several who loved us pass away; and we never can live over again as we lived before. A portion of our lives is consumed by the torch we follow at their funerals. We enter into another state of existence, resembling indeed and partaking of the former, but another! it contains the substance of the same sorrows, the shadow of the same joys. Alas, how true are the words of the old poet:—

We lose a life in every friend we lose,  
And every death is painful but the last."

## A MOTHER ON HER CHILD'S COMPANIONSHIP.

"Where on earth is there so much society as in a beloved child? He accompanies me in my walks, gazes into my eyes for what I am gathering from books, tells me more and better things than they do, and asks me often what neither I nor they can answer. When he is absent I am filled with reflections; when he is present I have room for none beside what I receive from him. The charms of his childhood bring me back to the delights of mine, and I fancy I hear my own words in a sweeter voice. Will he—O how I tremble at the mute oracle of futurity!—will he ever be as happy as I have been?"

## MUSIC AND MEMORY.

"When Pericles is too grave and silent, I usually take up my harp and sing. . . . 'That instrument,' said he, 'is the rod of Hermes; it calls up the spirits from below, or conducts them back again to Elysium. With what ecstasy do I throb and quiver under those refreshing showers of sound!'

Come, sprinkle me soft music o'er the breast,  
 Bring me the varied colors into light  
 That now obscurely on its tablet rest,  
 Show me its flowers and figures fresh and bright.

Waked at thy voice and touch, again the chords  
 Restore what restless years hath moved away,  
 Restore the glowing cheeks, the tender words,  
 Youth's short-lived spring and pleasure's summer-day."

Extracts express an original book badly, whether in matter or manner, although the above have some interest in themselves; but the three scenes in which *Aspasia* completes the story of *Agamemnon* it will be best to leave untouched. The first, wherein the shade of *Iphigenia*, unconscious of her mother's double crime, meets on his descent from death the shade of her father, by whose hand she had herself perished, is for the originality of its conception unsurpassed; and the second and third, representing the fate of *Clytemnestra* and the madness of *Orestes*, are, in my judgment, for the intensity and vividness of their dramatic expression, unequalled in the dramatic writings of our time. "*My Agamemnon*," wrote *Landor* (14th April, 1836), "was composed in bed, all night and half the morning, on my recollecting what defects the Greek tragedians had left in their management of the house of *Atreus*. And yet it is on this ground that their laurels have grown so high. It is hardly worth while to do anything admirable, for men's admiration will spring from something worse. Critics admire the *Agamemnon* of *Æschylus* far above his *Prometheus*. . . . There is," he wrote in the same letter, "only one thought of another man beside myself, in the whole book, and this I have given twice, wishing it to be the one that weighed most with *Pericles*, — that he never caused an Athenian to put on mourning. In the rest, prose and poetry, wherever I detected a similarity to another, I struck out the sentence, however loath, and however certain that it *would have been* mine. But, alas, the air we breathe is breathed by millions; so are the thoughts. They both act as new organs, and both diversely." Though scrupulous not to commit the offence, he could not avoid the charge; and the reader will be amused to learn the effect hereafter produced by it. Suffice it now to say that the book was not published until the spring of 1836; and that in the interval *Landor* had left the villa *Gherardescha*, and taken up his residence in England.

#### IX. SELF-BANISHMENT FROM FIESOLE.

"I leave thee, beauteous Italy! no more  
 From the high terraces, at even-tide,  
 To look supine into thy depths of sky,  
 Thy golden moon between the cliff and me,  
 Or thy dark spires of fretted cypresses  
 Bordering the channel of the milky-way  
 Fiesole and Valdarno must be dreams  
 Hereafter, and my own lost Affricco



Murmur to me but in the poet's song.  
 I did believe (what have I not believed?)  
 Weary with age, but unopprest by pain,  
 To close in thy soft clime my quiet day,  
 And rest my bones in the mimosa's shade.  
 Hope! hope! few ever cherisht thee so little,  
 Few are the heads thou hast so rarely raised;  
 But thou didst promise this, and all was well:  
 For we are fond of thinking where to lie  
 When every pulse hath ceast, when the lone heart  
 Can lift no aspiration . . . Over all  
 The smiles of Nature shed a potent charm,  
 And light us to our chamber at the grave."

W. S. L.

"Among the unaccountable things in me, and many are so even to myself, is this, that I admired Pindar somewhat more in youth than in what ought to be a graver age. However, his wisdom, his high-mindedness, and his excellent selection of topics, in which no writer of prose or verse ever equalled him, render him worthy to spend the evening with one who has passed the earlier part of the day with Dante." His old school-fellow Carey had visited Italy, and to him these words were addressed, thanking him for his translation of Pindar. What also the course of my narrative requires that I should now relate, the reader must be content to accept among the "unaccountable things." No account can as yet be given of it which he will be able to regard as entirely intelligible.

In April, 1835, Landor had left his villa, and was in Florence waiting a letter from Armitage Brown, at this time on his way to England. A few nights before his departure, when bidden to his last dinner at the villa, he had been present at the scene that had driven Landor from Fiesole; and in justification of this extreme step an account of what he witnessed had been asked from him. "It was scarcely possible for me," he wrote from Genoa on the 4th of April,\* "to make such a reply as your letter required before I quitted Florence. As we have a day's rest here I avail myself of it." He grieves to have to be ungracious to one who had uniformly treated him with the utmost courtesy and kindness; "but there are certain words, which, once uttered, whether directed towards myself or my friend, cancel every obligation; nor can I affect to feel their power lessened on account of their being uttered by the wife of my friend." He then describes language used in presence of the elder children, which had constituted the unpardonable offence, and which he declares to have had no provocation. "It commenced by upbraiding you for conduct excessively bad towards herself; but her own statement, as well as your answer, certainly proved that you were blameless, and I ventured to point out her mistake. Unfortunately no attention was paid to either of us; and still more unfortunately —" But the story is an old and familiar one, that it is the very consciousness of our own injustice which will make us add to the injury we inflict, and that, by doing all we can to aggravate the wrong we commit, we seem to justify ourselves for committing it.

\* The letter is addressed "Post restante, Florence."

"I am ashamed to write down the words, but to hear them was painful. . . . I am afraid my patience would have left me in a tenth part of the time; but you, to my astonishment, sat with a composed countenance, never once making use of an uncivil expression, unless the following may be so considered, when, after about an hour, she seemed exhausted: 'I beg, madam, you will, if you think proper, proceed; as I made up my mind, from the first, to endure at least twice as much as you have been yet pleased to speak.' After dinner, when I saw her leave the room, I followed, and again pointed out her mistake; when she readily agreed with me, saying she was convinced you were not to blame. At this I could not forbear exclaiming, 'Well, then?' in the hope of bearing back to you some slight acknowledgment of regret on her part: but in this I was disappointed. You conclude your letter with, 'I feel confident you will write a few lines, exculpating me if you think I have acted with propriety in very trying circumstances; and condemning me if I acted with violence, precipitation, or rudeness.' For more than eleven years I have been intimate with you, and, during that time, frequenting your house, I never once saw you behave towards Mrs. Landor otherwise than with the most gentlemanly demeanor, while your love for your children was unbounded. I was always aware that you gave entire control into her hands over the children, the servants, and the management of the house; and when vexed or annoyed at anything, I could not but remark that you were in the habit of requesting the cause to be remedied or removed, as a favor to yourself. All this I have more than once repeated to Mrs. Landor in answer to her accusations against you, which I could never well comprehend. When I have elsewhere heard you accused of being a violent man, I have frankly acknowledged it; limiting however your violence to persons guilty of meanness, roguery, or duplicity; by which I meant, and said, that you utterly lost your temper with the Italians."

It will not be supposed that these sentences, or even the entire contents of the letter, if it had been possible to quote them, are thought by me to afford the justification for which they were sought by Landor and written by his friend: but what they tell has the value of suggesting much that the writer had not the power to tell; the "gentlemanly demeanor" and the "unbounded love" are significant of more than was intended by such contrasted expressions; and in the scene referred to, taken at its worst, even in the step that followed, extravagant as it was, the reader of former passages of this work \* may possibly see but the sequel of what could not ever have been expected to have favorable issue. If, at the same time, I have delineated fairly the character it was my purpose to express, it will seem that no injury so fatal could be done, nor any offence so unpardonable be committed, as one that might wound such a man in his self-love by lowering him in his own opinion before others, with whom especially he desired to stand well. He fled from his young wife at Jersey, not because of her expressions, but because her little sister heard them; † and he had now the same reason for deserting his home at Fiesole, without, alas, the same excuse for returning. It was a home that must in future have always listeners for such disputes;

\* *Ante*, pp. 196-198, 250-252.

† *Ante*, pp. 250, 251.



and perhaps, with every day that now passed, disposed more and more themselves to take part in them. "It was not willingly," he wrote to Southey, "that I left Tuscany and my children. There was but one spot upon earth on which I had fixed my heart, and four objects on which my affection rested. That they might not hear every day such language as no decent person should ever hear once, nor despise both parents, I left the only delight of my existence." The conclusion nevertheless is forced upon us, that it was more for his own sake than for theirs the extraordinary determination was taken. He could not believe, if we are to trust the language always afterwards used by him, that, with his own mere withdrawal from his home, all indecency of language or temper was to cease there forever; and the more he condemns what had become unbearable by himself, the more he condemns himself for having left his children exposed to it. There is no escape from this difficulty.

It is true that attempts were made for him by friends, in which he took part more or less eagerly, to induce at least the two elder children to join him in England; he had settled so far as to engage to meet them at Verona in the hope of their return with him; in negotiations having this object in view, or similar but more partial concessions, Francis Hare and his relative Mrs. Dashwood, Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, his friend Ablett, and others very warmly engaged: there were even proposals for his own return urged in the year of his flight by his wife's relatives in England, pressed upon him two years afterwards by Crabb Robinson when visiting Italy with Wordsworth, and revived, at the instance of Mrs Landor herself,\* when Kenyon was at Fiesole with Mr. Bezzi two years later; but to these last overtures the only answer was a peremptory negative, and, under objections that would have seemed to me very far from insuperable, all the other endeavors broke down. I am bound to add, at the same time, that to an excessively urgent appeal from Mr. Ravenshaw, who had married one of his wife's sisters, he made detailed reply of such a character as to elicit from his brother-in-law frank admission of the strength of the grounds on which his refusal to comply was based; nor was the application from that quarter ever renewed. "I am sure you are wanted at home," wrote Crabb Robinson to him from the villa itself in June, 1837, "and that your presence might have the happiest effect on the character of your children. It might be decisive as to the happiness of your daughter." "I wish to Heaven Julia were with you," Mr. James had written to him in the same month of the previous year, 1836. "It would be a comfort to you and a blessing to her; for Italy, and Italy without a father's care, is a sad land for young fair woman." Between these dates I ventured myself to make inquiry if there were any chance of

\* "Their mother" (I quote Mr. Bezzi's letter to Landor, 19th November, 1839), "as you well know, does not, perhaps cannot, exercise any wholesome control over them" (the children); "she plainly admits this: and adduces it as a reason, among others, why she wishes and hopes you will return."

his consenting to return ; and his reply gave me no hope whatever. The condition he would have imposed rendered it equally impossible that he should rejoin his children in Italy, or that, with the decision at which the elder ones had arrived respecting their mother, they should join him in England. He showed me at the time, I well remember, a then unfinished Conversation in which he had just written these sentences : " Negligence of order and propriety, of duties and civilities, long endured, often deprecated, ceases to be tolerable, when children grow up and are in danger of following the example. It often happens that, if a man unhappy in the married state were to disclose the manifold causes of his uneasiness, they would be found, by those who were beyond their influence, to be of such a nature as rather to excite derision than sympathy. The waters of bitterness do not fall on his head in a cataract, but through a colander ; one however like the vases of the Danaides, perforated only for replenishment. We know scarcely the vestibule of a house of which we fancy we have penetrated all the corners. We know not how grievously a man may have suffered, long before the calumnies of the world befell him as he reluctantly left his house door. There are women from whom incessant tears of anger swell forth at imaginary wrongs ; but of contrition for their own delinquencies not one." Arrangements continued to be suggested, and there were even active measures on foot to give them trial, going so far in one instance as the engagement of a house near Plymouth in which the mother might reside with all the children, the father living in lodgings near ; \* but I believe his own resolve to have been now so decisively and so finally taken that at this point I quit the subject. Whatever further illustration it receives in these pages will be from circumstances or allusions unavoidably incident to the narrative.

In the month when he quitted Florence he had a letter from Francis Hare, at this time in Rome, full of pleasure and wonder at his *Shakespeare* ; telling him his genius had become stronger of wing under the heights of Fiesole ; hoping that his volume of unpublished Conversations had been found ; and suggesting as a subject for a new conversation to be added to it, the meeting and dinner of Pope Julius the Second, during his flight from Rome, with the two cardinals that succeeded him as Popes Leo and Clement. It was a good subject, but an unlucky time ; and as to the missing Conversations Landor

\* The unceasing efforts of Francis Hare and his cousin Mrs. Dashwood brought matters thus far. The latter wrote in November, 1837, to Landor's sister Elizabeth that he had consented to allow the whole family to come to England in the following April. " A more affectionate letter than usual from Arnold, and a most kind and sensible one from my excellent cousin Francis Hare, strongly advising the step for his children's sake, have led to this." Landor had written to her : " I shall tell him (F. H.) that they may all come next April, on condition that I never see her." Of course it all went off ; and in the next following month, at the end of a letter describing a proposal of Dr. Conolly's to restore " Shakespeare's chapel," to which he had subscribed five pounds, he named Mrs. Dashwood's scheme to me as a thing of the past, speaking at the same time very highly of her kindness. " The concern she takes in my family is infinitely greater than that of all the rest of the world : and the last thing I forget will be that."



had to reply even less favorably. He had just received a letter from Mr. Willis giving doubtful hope of their recovery. "I have to beg," said this characteristic effusion, "that you will lay to *the charge of England* a part of the annoyance you will feel about your books and MS. I was never more flattered by a commission, and I have never fulfilled one so ill. They went to America via Leghorn, and I expected fully to have arrived in New York a month or two after them. But here I am still, and here I fear I shall be for six months or a year to come. I will write immediately to the United States for them." England was the culprit for having treated Mr. N. P. Willis so well that he could not find it in his heart to quit the entertaining land. He was become Anglomane. "I think no king in Europe lives half so well" as he had lived in Gordon Castle and other Scotch houses, and in the hospitable halls of Lady Blessington.\* As for what Landor had written to him in praise of New England, — well, he thought that country really did deserve not ill of his respect, "but it is an ungracious people, and best judged at a distance. They would offend your notions of what is due from one *gentleman* to another every hour if you lived among them, while in the great outline (all that is seen in the distance) they are a just and intelligent race, and good trustees of one's birthright of national pride. The perfection of good fortune, I think, is to *be* an American and *live* with Englishmen." Landor will perhaps be thought not without excuse for the way in which he always afterwards spoke of Mr. N. P. Willis.

Before quitting Italy he stayed some time at the Baths of Lucca, and he did not arrive in England until the autumn of 1835. He stayed three months at Llanbedr Hall with Mr. Ablett, passed the winter months at Clifton, and rejoined his friend at Llanbedr in the spring of 1836.

\* She is my lodestar and most valued friend, for whose acquaintance I am so much indebted to you that you will find it difficult in your lifetime to diminish my obligations. I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

## BOOK SEVENTH.

1836-1857. ÆT. 61-82.

### TWENTY-ONE YEARS AT BATH.

- I. New and Old Friendships. — II. The Pentameron of Boccaccio and Petrarca. — III. Writing Plays. — IV. Reviewing a Reviewer. — V. Visits and Visitors. — VI. Death of Southey. — VII. Last Series of Conversations. — VIII. A Friend not Literary. — IX. Reviews, Collected Works, Poemata et Inscriptiones, and Hellenics. — X. Summer Holidays and Guests at Home. — XI. Deaths of Old Friends. — XII. Fruit gathered from an Old Tree. — XIII. Silent Companions. — XIV. Last Days in Bath, and Final Departure from England.

#### I. NEW AND OLD FRIENDSHIPS.

I HAVE described in a former page the impression made upon me by Landor when I met him first in the summer of 1836. He and Wordsworth had come to town expressly to witness Talfourd's *Ion*; with Crabb Robinson they occupied the same box on the first night of that beautiful tragedy; and well satisfied they seemed with themselves and with each other, as, to many who watched them during the performance, they half divided the interest with the play. We all of us met afterwards at Talfourd's house; but of the talk that might have made such a night memorable I regret that I recollect only one thing, impressed upon my memory by what followed a little later, that when the absence of Southey was deplored in connection with the domestic griefs that sadly occupied him at the time, there was an expression of feeling from both Wordsworth and Landor of unrestrained and unaffected earnestness. When a very few weeks had passed after this, it was not a little startling to receive a *Satire on Satirists*, very evidently by Landor, in which Wordsworth was handled sharply for alleged disrespect to Southey.

It is hardly worth mention here. It made Crabb Robinson very angry, and, to propitiate him, Landor good-naturedly called back the copy of the satire already on its way to Southey; but he stuck to his point that Wordsworth had been unjust to Southey's poetry, and had indeed small appreciation generally for the highest kinds of merit. To which Robinson made an excellent reply; going wider and deeper than he meant to go, or perhaps knew that he was going. "What matters it that he is insensible to the astonishing powers of Voltaire or Goethe? He is, after all, Wordsworth. In all cases I care little what a man is *not*; I look to what he *is*. And Wordsworth has



written a hundred poems the least excellent of which I would not sacrifice to give him that openness of heart you require. Productive power acts by means of concentration. With few exceptions those only love everything who, like me, can themselves do nothing." Nor was the satire itself all satire; for not a few passages from it might be cited that rise equally above the injustice committed and the anger provoked by it. *Pericles and Aspasia* had at this time been published, and to Southey thanks are given for having encouraged its writer to efforts of which the fruit was its Agamemnon scenes.

"Called up by genius in an after-age,  
That awful spectre shook the Athenian stage:  
From eve to morn, from morn to parting night,  
Father and daughter stood before my sight;  
I felt the looks they gave, the words they said,  
And reconducted each serener shade.  
Ever shall those to me be well-spent days;  
Sweet fell the tears upon them, sweet the praise."

For some of the praise I was responsible; and very cordial acknowledgment of it reached me in a letter written from Heidelberg (1st September, 1836), whither he had gone in the vain hope of being joined there by his elder children; when at the same time he sent me a fresh scene of *Orestes at Delphos*, and told me that those that had been most admired were "written at our friend Kenyon's before breakfast, but chiefly in the bedtime morning, while the sheets of *Pericles* were passing through the press." Not praise only fell, however, but here and there a less kindly word for which he had little tolerance. "I returned from Germany a fortnight since," he wrote to me from Clifton, on the 29th of October, "but found myself so fatigued and spiritless that I remained only a night in London, not even going to pay my respects at Gore House. The splendid things you have written of me have aroused, it seems, the choler of *Blackwood*. I never have read until this moment (nor now) a single number of that worthy, who, I understand, has the impudence to declare that I have stolen, God knows what, from him and others. . . . I am not informed how long this Scotchman has been at work about me, but my publisher has advised me that he loses £150 by my *Pericles*. So that it is probable the Edinburgh Areopagites have condemned me to a fine in my absence; for I never can allow any man to be a loser by me, and am trying to economize to the amount of this indemnity to Saunders and Otley. . . . I think it probable that I shall fix myself at Clifton for a year." The *Blackwood* review was really not a bad one, and, with a laugh for the absurdity of its parallel passages, might have satisfied any man; he described it himself as a mere "kick on the shin between two compliments"; yet what was here threatened was soon afterwards actually done, and the hundred pounds which Mr. James had obtained for the MS. of *Pericles* was paid back by Landor to its publishers! It may be held perhaps hereafter among the curiosities of literature that an author should have done this. I am not acquainted with any other instance.

In the same letter he sent me a copy of the original edition of a book which had belonged to Swift's celebrated uncle Godwin, progenitor of the so-named first husband of his friend the Countess de Molandè, — Milton's *Defensio* : and here I may say, once for all, that a continual and inexhaustible source of sympathy between us was our common admiration of those chiefs of our English Commonwealth to whom early studies had led me ; and that even the glittering forms of antique gods and heroes never took more radiant shape in Landor's imagination, than the homely iron helmets and buffalo cuirasses of our own Hampdens, Iretons, Blakes, and Cromwells.

At Clifton the winter was passed ; but before I mention his meeting with the friend who joined him there, a couple of extracts from his letters addressed to that friend may be given.

TO SOUTHEY : FROM LLANBEDR HALL, 4TH FEBRUARY, 1836.

"You too have had great sufferings" [this followed the mention already quoted of his own family sorrow], "but not hopeless, and every source of pride that virtue can open to assuage them. Pray tell me whether there is any certainty of your being in London soon. I abhor the very name, but I will meet you there if you will let me. But I am afraid you will hardly have patience with a man so obstinate and incorrigible in his politics. I detest the trickery and sheer dishonesty of many of the Whigs as much as you do : but I am convinced that we must yield to the impulse that has been given to men's minds, and that we must remove (since we cannot cure) what works upon their envy and malice. I have not been quite unoccupied. You will soon have the *Letters of Pericles and Aspasia*, which I could have greatly increased in number ; but I often have had occasion to say to myself,

'Non profecturis litora bobus aras.'

Now I should construe *bobus* not 'with the oxen,' but 'for the oxen.' Did you ever peradventure meet with Mr. Willis, the American?" [He tells the story already told, up to the assurance he had received, just before quitting Fiesole, that the books and MS. had been "consigned to an American near the Leghorn gate."] "I called on the American : he denied that he had ever seen them, and was angry at such an intimation that he was deficient in punctuality. I took no more trouble about them. The corrections and additions cost me more trouble and time than the composition had done. But there is enough without any more. I am now on my way to my favorite Clifton, where my intention is to remain a month at least ; for the fogs of London make my heart quite flabby, to say nothing of quinsey ;

'O, tormento maggior d' ogni tormento!'"

TO SOUTHEY : FROM PENROSE COTTAGE, CLIFTON : 30TH OCTOBER, 1836.

"I have been in Germany three months, hoping that some of my family would meet me there. Here I am again at Clifton, and here I think I shall finish my days ; the climate suits my health so perfectly. Again I hear the rumor, and this time I hope it is not a false one, that you are coming amongst us. God grant that the expectation may arise from some improvement in the health of Mrs. Southey. I shall never regret that you do not



come, if I hear that you could consistently with your sense of duty ; so much greater would be my pleasure at this event" [he means the recovery of Mrs. Southey] "than even your society could give me. . . . Nothing can exceed the civilities I met with in Germany among the learned. No sooner had I reached England than I was informed of an attack made on me, and a worse threatened, by some doctor or professor in Edinburgh. But his labor is vain in regard to me. I have only to send back the £ 100 I got for my *Pericles*, which I have already told the publisher I shall do. Did you ever receive those two volumes? The short letter of *Pericles* on the death of his sons will please you, and perhaps some few others. If the Edinburgh worthy wished to impose a fine on me for my delinquency, why could not he mention some respectable family who wanted the amount. He may influence the opinion of a certain number of people for a little while, but of none about whom I care a straw. I never remonstrate: and never will contend with any man for anything. I formed this resolution when I went to college and have kept it. I have been reading for the third time Charles Elton's *Elegy* on the loss of his two sons. It is not an elegy (though the structure of the verse has nothing to do with the matter), but many parts strike me as much as anything I ever read of the elegiac. Tears were in my eyes the first time, the second time, and the third time, on reading

‘That night the little chamber where they lay,  
Fast by my own, was vacant and was still.’

I do not like the Rhine so much as many parts of Italy. Como, Sorrento, and Amalfi, to say nothing of Ischia and Capri, far surpass all without the Alps, I mean on this side of them. Let me hear anything which gives you satisfaction or hope."

There was little of either, alas, left for Southey in this world ; but such lights and shadows of the pleasant past as were still to be reflected from its old associations and memories, he now for the last time enjoyed in company with his friend. Their sympathies were close and affectionate as ever, widely as their opinions had diverged ; and even of some later Conversations, in which idols of his own were overthrown, Southey had written shortly before to another friend : "What you have heard me say of his temper is the only explanation of his faults. Never did man represent himself in his writings so much less generous, less just, less compassionate, less noble in all respects than he really is. I certainly never knew any one of brighter genius or of kinder heart." With this bright genius and kind heart he now, accompanied by his son, walked for the last time over the downs of Clifton, and revisited in Bristol the places of his boyhood. The good old Cottle, who had published his *Joan of Arc* exactly forty years before, and advanced him the money to buy his wedding-ring, entertained them there ; they went to the house of Southey's grandmother at Bedminster, and to the church which with her and his mother he had attended half a hundred years before ; they went to his Aunt Tyler's in College Green ; they included in their pilgrimage the house in which he was born, the schools he had been sent to, and what had been his father's shop. Nothing was omitted, and Southey

seemed to have forgotten nothing ; not even a short-cut or by-way of that strangely unattractive city ; and as he darted down some alley, or threaded some narrow lane, he would tell his companions that he had not traversed it since his school-boy days. "Ah," said Lander to him, as they stumbled over some workmen in turning away from College Green, "workmen some day may be busy on this very spot putting up your statue ; but it will be twenty years hence." "Well," was his friend's rejoinder, "if ever I have one, I would wish it to be here." The wish has not had fulfilment, though more than thirty years have passed since then. "This was a pleasant visit," writes Mr. Cuthbert Southey, "and my father's enjoyment was greatly enhanced by the company of Mr. Savage Lander, who was then residing at Clifton, and in whose society we spent several delightful days. He was one of the few men with whom my father used to enter freely into conversation, and on such occasions it was no mean privilege to be a listener."

Lander quitted Clifton in the early spring of 1837, was again for a time at Llanbedr, visited Lady Blessington in London and his sisters at Warwick, joined Kenyon and Torquay, and passed some of the later days of summer with his friend Brown at Plymouth. Yet idle as such a life might have been to another man, it was not so to him. Creatures of his fancy went with him everywhere ; were present with him most in crowds ; and were altogether much more real to him, when he cared to converse with them at all, than any actual living companions. Wherever pen and ink were accessible to him, and a sheet of paper, he was equipped for every enterprise. "When I think of writing on any subject, I abstain a long while from every kind of reading, lest the theme should haunt me, and some of the ideas take the liberty of playing with mine. I do not wish the children of my brain to imitate the gait or learn any tricks of others." All the time I have named was one of rich and ready productiveness ; "conservative" letters, conversations, dramatic scenes, came forth abundantly ; and a work was brought to completion which he had begun before quitting Italy, in which Boccaccio and Petrarca were the speakers, and which with the Shakespeare and the Pericles formed a trilogy so filled with the greatness and variety of his genius that it may be called, upon the whole, its most complete expression. My account of this work may be preceded by a few notes from letters written in the interval which will tell us something of the friends seen or books read by him while he had it in hand.

At an old bookseller's in Bristol he picked up some of the writings of Blake, and was strangely fascinated by them. He was anxious to have collected as many more as he could, and enlisted me in the service ; but he as much wanted patience for it as I wanted time, and between us it came to nothing. He protested that Blake had been Wordsworth's prototype, and wished they could have divided his madness between them ; for that some accession of it in the one case,



and something of a diminution of it in the other, would very greatly have improved both. He had been reading Wordsworth's "last" volume when he first wrote to me from Clifton, and was confirmed in the opinion he had held when most admiring him, that his ship would sail the better for casting many loose things overboard. What a fine poem was the *Power of Sound*, and how magnificently the tenth stanza began! "But after eight most noble Pindaric verses on Pan and the Fawns and Satyrs, he lays hold on a coffin and a convict, and ends in a flirtation with a steeple. We must never say all we think, and least so in poetry." What follows is dated a few months later (9th December, 1837), when he was still angry with Wordsworth; who yet retained enough of his old admiration to have been able to afford to give a smile to this, if I could have shown it to him. "Yesterday a Mr. Moreton, a young man of rare judgment, read to me a manuscript by Mr. Tennyson, very different in style from his printed poems. The subject is the death of Arthur. It is more Homeric than any poem of our time, and rivals some of the noblest parts of the *Odyssey*. There are two kinds of simplicity: this exhibits one. If I have time between the present hour and the postman, I will attempt the other, the more popular.

"I met a little boy on the canal,  
And he was singing blithely fal-de-ral.  
Now Heaven has placed it high 'mid human joys  
To talk with elf-lock girls and ragged boys.  
'Have you a father?' 'Plenty,' he replied.  
'A mother?' 'She was yesterday a bride.'  
'A brother?' 'One too many.' 'Any sister?'  
'She's dead; I never (till you named her) mist her.'  
At these quick answers, as was meet, I smiled,  
And tapped the shoulder of the clever child."

Thanking him for his *Pericles and Aspasia*, Crabb Robinson had mentioned his having "put into the lips of Nurse Demophile a sarcasm which dear Charles Lamb uttered when a little child. Indeed at his age it was no sarcasm, but mere childish naïvete. His sister took him into a churchyard, where he amused himself for a considerable time reading the inscriptions, and at last came to her, and with great gravity said, 'Sister Mary, where do the naughty people lie?'" "Your anecdote of Lamb's childhood," replied Landor, "makes my heart overflow. How much wiser are we with our own wisdom than with other people's! It fits us. . . . Somebody told me," he adds, "that your illustrious friend Goethe hated dogs. God forgive him, if he did. I never can believe it of him. They too are half-poets; they are dreamers. Do any other animals dream? For my part, as you know, I love them heartily. They are grateful, they are brave, they are communicative, and they never play at cards." At the close of his letter he wishes for a translation of Goethe's *Iphigeneia*, and in his next has found what he wanted in Taylor's *Specimens*. There it was, with "fifty other fine things," of which Nathan the Wise had impressed him most; though he thought the other a "great work," and

only regretted that Goethe had not corrected in it the principal fault of the old tragedians by making the chorus at all times subservient to the action. Two lines of Taylor's version he hoped the original did not contain: where he talks of Iris with "painted hand" dividing the "dusky-skirted" clouds. "This is not the language of tragedy, nor good or tolerable poetry of any kind. Clouds are never dusky-skirted, the skirt being always the lightest part of them; and *skirt* itself is a mean and vile word on the occasion, though common, and defended in some sort by the practice of Shakespeare. But we ought never to borrow his skirt or his blanket, though he has both at our service." He hopes too that it is Taylor and not Goethe who has added a new god to the Greek theogony, "*Fulfilment*, daughter of the almighty sire." That would never do, either for gods or allegorical personages; nor could allegorical personages ever come forward with effect in the drama.

"I shall be at Gore House on Monday," he says in a letter of this date; "pray come in the evening. I told Lady Blessington I should not let any of her court stand at all in my way. When I am tired of them, I leave them. But if you come, I can fly to you at once in case of annoyance. Courtesy is not an unpleasant exercise for a little while. It is like riding a spirited horse well enough to show we can keep our seat and do it gracefully, but there is no occasion to be at it all day long. It is quite enough to let the beast know that he has a master who is up to him and the worst of his curvets and prances." But not after the visit did he so speak of the house in which his happiest London life was passed, for of all others it was that in which he felt the least constraint, and knew that he should always find the warmest welcome. Its attraction to those who had familiar admission there was even less the accomplishments and grace of its mistress, than her trueheartedness and constancy in friendship; and no one had reason to know this better than Landor. Again and again he dwells upon it in letters to his sister. From the splendor of the mansion, the taste and order of its interior, the extent and beauty of its pleasure-grounds, its company of men the most distinguished and of opinions the most various and opposed, — he comes always back to its central charm, the unaffectedness and warmth of heart that presided over all, and yielded to every one who entered it his greatest enjoyment. He had himself at last quite a tender friendship for two lilac-trees that flowered under the terrace where he had his favorite seat, overlooking what tradition still eagerly claimed as the birthplace and deathplace of the two greatest of English sovereigns, Elizabeth and Cromwell; and if he did not, as each year came round, appear when those lilacs were in bloom, he was playfully reminded that they waited and were longing for him. All are gone now; a public garden has swallowed up house and terrace, and Cromwell Roads and Cromwell Houses have covered once-memorable spots with mere shadows of a name; but there are some who never pass where they once were without thinking of her to whom



their pleasantest associations belong, and who merited so well the grateful affection which Landor was always eager to express for her.

“White and dim-purple breathed my favorite pair  
Under thy terrace, hospitable heart,  
Whom twenty summers more and more endeared;  
Part on the Arno, part where every clime  
Sent its most graceful sons to kiss thy hand,  
To make the humble proud, the proud submissive,  
Wiser the wisest, and the brave more brave.  
Never, ah never now, shall we alight  
Where the man-queen was born, or, higher up,  
The nobler region of a nobler soul,  
Where breathed his last the more than kingly man.  
Thou sleepest, not forgotten nor unmourned,  
Beneath the chestnut shade by Saint Germain.”

From other letters written to myself at this time I take what follow. The first arose out of some remarks made by me on his *Pericles*; and never, I think, was there better refutation of a common fallacy that great men who have succeeded to the great, and are mounted as it were on their shoulders, must necessarily be of taller stature and wider vision than their predecessors.

“Critics, in supposing that improvements were constantly made in poetry by the successors of the first great masters, add an apex to the accumulated foolery of ages. Thus not only was Virgil preferred to Homer (and especially in those very qualities in which he is most signally the inferior), but Euripides to Sophocles, and Sophocles to Æschylus. Whereas there is enough of materials in Æschylus to equip a troop of Sophocleses and a squadron of Euripideses. The tragedies of this latter, of which the choruses are admirable, are as ill-constructed as Virgil’s epic. On the contrary, nothing is more skilful in the Attic scheme than the dramas of Æschylus, nude as the heroes and gods, and as well proportioned and potent. So shall I think until it is disproved that there is any skill in so ordaining them that every action shall be the legitimate parent of its successor. The Spaniards were the first discoverers of a new world in tragedy, rich indeed, but spreading in all countries a sad distemper. Plot was the word. Labyrinths to the ignorant bear always the semblance of deep contrivance and rare ingenuity, of amplitude and extent. All the Greeks renounced such barbarism; Æschylus most decidedly. In him there is no trickery, no trifling, no delay, no exposition, no garrulity, no dogmatism, no declamation, no prosing; none of the invidious sneers, none of the captious sophistry, of the Socratic school; but the loud clear challenge, the firm unstealthy step, of an erect broad-breasted soldier. Depend on it that the reader to whom is granted an ardent mind with a clear judgment will discover in Æschylus a far higher power of poetry than in those ancients who drug us with soporific apophthegms, or in those moderns who mystify us with impenetrable metaphysics. Our best sympathies rest ever among the generous, among the brave, among those who are fallen from the summits of the world; and our hearts are the most healthily warmed when they are drawn before their sufferings and wrongs. I scarcely dare lift up my eyes when I remember that on this subject I differ, although but in a degree, from Aristoteles. He, however, had seen only a few headlands: the continent of Shakespeare, with its prodigious range of inextinguishable fires, its rivers of golden sands, its very deserts paved with jewels, its forests of unknown plants to which the known were dwarfs, this unpromised and

unexpected land, in all its freshness and variety and magnitude, was to emerge."

In connection with the same book and the specimens it contains of orators, I had asked him what he thought the finest thing in that kind, modern or ancient; and he answered without hesitation by naming these dozen words of Chatham: "The first shot that is fired in America separates the two countries."

"What searching sagacity! what inevitable truth! The surest sign of a great prophecy is the coincidence of admiration and unbelief. For anything like this of our last and almost only grand minister, we must press through the crowd of orators, we must pass Cicero, we must pass Demosthenes, we must raise up our eyes to Pericles, when he tells the childless of the Athenians that 'the year hath lost its spring.'"

#### THE LESBIA OF CATULLUS.

"Nothing is absurder than the idea of the grammarians that the Lesbia of Catullus was the wife of Quinctus Metellus Celer, who was one of the Claudian family, and as wicked as any of it. Lesbia was not indeed, as most of Horace's girls were, a girl of straw: she was really of flesh and blood, but evidently of common life, and she descended but little when she ran down from her dead sparrow to display herself 'in quadriuiis et angiporis.'"

#### ANECDOTE OF CANNING.

"Canning had much festivity and frolic, and he retained to the last years of his life no little of the school-boy in his manners and conversation, with about the same indifference whom they might offend. So unstudied and ingenuous were his courtesies, that, when George III. saw him again for the first time after his duel with Castlereagh, and inquired with his usual curiosity where he was hit, he snatched the king's hand and placed it on the part, which happened to be among the least opportune for inspection or demonstration. George raised his white eyebrows, opened his glassy eyes, turned round to the lord-in-waiting, and said with perturbation, 'A very odd man this Mr. Canning! a very odd man indeed!'"

Landor was close on Canning's heels at Oxford, had been in communication with him more than once, and had not been very tolerant of many passages in his public life; but he never denied his possession of rare and exquisite powers, and it was upon my calling his attention to what seemed an unfair application of some remarks on the Castlereagh quarrel that these letters were written.

"Arrogant as he was in pretension while holding office, indifferent to veracity in assertion, and swayed by vanity or resentment from any principle to its opposite, he was delightful in private society, adapting his conversation to the temper and abilities of those with whom he happened to converse. There he was never in opposition, but always in power: there his humor was easy and graceful: there his arrows were placed with the points downward, attracting all, wounding none. But minds, like bodies, if they prematurely swell out, then suddenly cease to grow in height and compass, and become sickly and irritable; Mr. Canning's did; and his tongue betrayed his distemper. His petulance in Parliament made it incredible that,



in addition to his witticisms in poetry, he had formerly been the rival of the otherwise unrivalled Sydney Smith in the piquancy and aptness of his criticisms."

From letters of the same date, explaining other allusions in his published dialogues, I take two extracts more.

#### ANECDOTE OF THURLOW.

"Thurlow was a chancellor who little adorned the woolsack. . . . He is recorded to have given no important decision without having first consulted Sergeant Hill, unless he had in view some private object. His wisdom rested all on his massive eyebrows; and there was room for more. A modest young clergyman was earnestly recommended to his patronage for preferment by a gentleman who on his entering life had rendered him many services. He received him with his usual surliness and brutality, threw before him wide open his *Book of Livings*, and told him to take up a pen and to put it on the one he wished to have. Entreaty that his lordship would himself name the benefice was vain. At last the pen timidly rested on a vicarage. 'By God, sir,' cried Thurlow (who, as he never was likely to be by God otherwise than in an oath, never missed the opportunity), 'you have taken a beggarly cure close to the best living in my gift!'"

#### SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY.

"No ministry ever thought of raising Romilly to the peerage, although never was a gentleman of his profession respected more highly or more universally. The reason could not be that already too many of it had entered the House of Lords; since every wind of every day had blown bellying silk gowns to that quarter, and under the highest walls of Westminster was moored a long galley of lawyers, chained by the leg to their administrations, some designated by the names of fishing-towns and bathing-machines they had never entered, and others of hamlets and farms they had recently invaded."

He never changed or faltered in this love and admiration for Romilly; and one of his letters to me written after his 80th year expressed the delight with which he had again been reading the memoir of him by his sons. "Of all the public men in England at any time he was the honestest. He may be compared with Phocion."

## II. THE PENTAMERON OF BOCCACCIO AND PETRARCA.

When Armitage Brown thanked Landor for this little volume, saying that never had he devoured a book with fiercer appetite, he also reminded him that already he had heard some portion of it under the hills at Fiesole. There it had been begun, and on every lustrous page of it will be found the genius of the country that so gave it birth. I have spoken of the memories of Boccaccio that were on all sides of Landor at his villa, from whose gate up to the gates of Florence there was hardly a street or farm that the great story-teller had not associated with some witty or affecting narrative. The place was peopled by his genius with creatures that neither seasons nor factions had

been able to change. Happy and well founded was the prediction of his friend, that long before the *Decameron* would cease to be recited under their arching vines, the worms would be the only fighters for Guelph or Ghibelline; and that even under so terrible a visitation as another plague, its pages would remain a solace to all who could find refuge and relief in letters.

Such a refuge and relief had they been to Landor in every plague by which he had been visited, and this book was payment for a portion of the debt. Boccaccio is its hero; and the idea of it was doubtless taken from his letter to Petrarca accompanying the copy of *Dante* transcribed by himself for his use, inviting him to look more closely into it, and if possible to admire it more. In his illness at Certaldo he is visited by his friend; during interviews that occupy five several days, the Divine Comedy is the subject of their talk; and very wonderful talk it is that can make any subject, however great, the centre of so wide a range of scholarship and learning and of such abounding wealth of illustration, can press into the service of argument such a delightful profusion of metaphor and imagery, can mingle humor and wit with so much tenderness and wisdom, and clothe in language of consummate beauty so much dignity and variety of thought. But amidst it all we never lose our interest in the simple and kindly old burgess of Certaldo and his belongings; his little maid Assunta and her lover; even the rascally old frate confessor, who suggests his last witty story: and not more delightful is the grave Petrarca when his eloquence is at its best, than in the quaint little scene where Assunta has to girth up his palfrey for him.

The title of the book should be given in full. *The Pentameron; or Interviews of Messer Giovanni Boccaccio and Messer Francesco Petrarca, when said Messer Giovanni lay infirm at Viletta hard by Certaldo: after which they saw not each other on our Side of Paradise: shewing how they discoursed upon that famous Theologian Messer Dante Alighieri, and sundry other Matters. Edited by Pievano D. Grigi.* And here I may remark that Mr. Kirkup, the greatest authority in everything relating to Dante, thinks it as much an error of his friend to have called him Messer as if some Italian critic had called himself Sir Landor. "In all the legal documents I have of the sale of Peter Dante's estate he is called Dominus Petrus filius Dantii Allighierii: Dominus being the Latin for Lord or Messire, the title applied to a judge in the republic, while poor Dante is named as a common citizen in the same legal deeds in which his son is always styled Messire, or Dominus." All which might be perfectly true, said Landor pleasantly; but perhaps the prete Grigi, who thought Dante memorable only for his theology, did not know it.

As on the title-page of the Shakespeare we find only Mr. Ephraim Barnett's name, so on this stands only Domenico Grigi's. In what way he possessed himself of the manuscript is not clearly stated, but, after translation by the best hand he could afford to engage, he had



brought it over to London ; because he greatly wanted a bell, he says, for his church at San Vivaldo, and hearing that the true religion was rapidly gaining ground in England, to the unspeakable comfort and refreshment of the faithful, he bethought himself that he might peradventure obtain such effectual aid from the piety and liberality of converts as wellnigh to accomplish the purchase of one. He has also a word or two on what was still remaining at Certaldo of Ser Giovanni's house, and of his tomb and effigy in the church ; remarking that nobody had opened the grave to throw light upon his relics, nobody had painted the marble, nobody had broken off a foot or a finger to do him honor, and not even an English name was engraven on the face, although the English held confessedly the highest rank in that department of literature. Nor out of keeping with the playful humor that thus runs through the whole of his introduction is the grave little note which is struck at its close, when, after relating the death of Petrarca not very long after their interview, and that Boccaccio followed him before he had worn the glossiness off the cloak which the other in his will had bequeathed to him, the good priest adds : " We struggle with death while we have friends around to cheer us ; the moment we miss them, we lose all heart for the contest. Pardon my reflection. I ought to have remembered I am not in my stone pulpit at home."

Landor had no ground for complaining of the reception of this book, by the few whose good opinion he valued : and for the rest he had but to remember, what is said in the course of it, that what makes the greatest vernal shoot is apt to make the least autumnal ; that what was true of the fame of Marcellus, "*crescit occulto velut arbor ævo*," is true of every other fame ; and that since we can hardly hope for this, and enjoy immediate celebrity besides, the few may be held supremely fortunate to whom a choice between them has been given. Upon the same subject, in that highest aspect of it which takes the form of admonition to the worshippers of immediate ascendancies, this very volume contained a saying remarkable for its beauty. It occurred in a note to the five dramatic scenes which originally closed the *Pentameron* with a *Pentalogia* ; one of these being the quarrel of Bacon and Essex, where Bacon's proud belief in his own superiority to all living men, drawn from him by the contempt of Essex, is thus checked by Landor. "Bacon little knew or suspected that there was then existing (the only one that ever did exist) his superior in intellectual power. Position gives magnitude. While the world was rolling above Shakespeare, he was seen imperfectly : when he rose above the world, it was discovered that he was greater than the world. The most honest of his contemporaries would scarcely have admitted this, even had they known it. But vast objects of remote altitude must be looked at a long while before they are ascertained. Ages are the telescope-tubes that must be lengthened out for Shakespeare ; and generations of men serve but as single witnesses to his claims."

"I was at Talfourd's yesterday," wrote Kenyon, soon after the volume appeared, "and was condemned to listen on all sides to the praises of your *Pentameron*. My friend Miss Barrett, too, says of it that if it were not for the necessity of getting through a book, some of the pages are too delicious to turn over. Leigh Hunt reckoned it to be, on the whole, Landor's masterpiece; and Julius Hare said that literature had nowhere so delightful a picture of the friendship of two supposed rivals, Goethe's actual intercourse with Schiller being the only thing to compare with it in beauty. To Crabb Robinson also, who found it waiting for him on his return from Italy with Wordsworth in the autumn of 1837, it seemed as if no other of Landor's books had given him so great a pleasure; and the generality of prose writing, by the side of it, seemed to him but as the murky fog of Little Knight Street during Michaelmas term compared to the pure atmosphere of Certaldo on such summer nights as he had spent between Fiesole and Florence "with Parigi for my protector." Parigi was Landor's favorite Italian dog, and the only inmate of the villa that had not welcomed the traveller at his recent visit. "Parigi was not so kind as he used to be; yet when I called to him he came to me, and only turned back slowly as if he felt, 'This is not the one I expected.' I really had that fancy at the time." Another remark from this letter \* will properly introduce the passage of which it speaks. "There is a piece of humor where you compare Lucretius and Dante so precisely in the style of dear Charles Lamb, that when I read it to any one, which I have done six times already, I cannot help stuttering as he used to do, and half shutting my eye when I come to the words, *and not damned for it*." The comparison, a masterly one, is made by Petrarca, but the words referred to are in Boccaccio's mouth.

"I have always heard that Ser Dante was a very good man and sound Catholic: but Christ forgive me if my heart is oftener on the side of Lucretius! Observe, I say my heart; nothing more. I devoutly hold to the sacraments and the mysteries: yet somehow I would rather see men tranquillized than frightened out of their senses, and rather fast asleep than burning. Sometimes I have been ready to believe, as far as our holy faith will allow me, that it were better our Lord were nowhere, than torturing in his inscrutable wisdom, to all eternity, so many myriads of us poor devils, the creatures of his hands. Do not cross thyself so thickly, Francesco; for I would be a good Catholic, alive or dead. But, upon my conscience, it

\* There is a further allusion in it to some lines found in Boccaccio's desk that are in fact a very exact picture of Landor's farm at Fiesole and the imagined pursuits of his children, which Mr. Layard will forgive me for quoting in unexpected illustration of what very lately he told me himself of his still vivid recollection of those scenes. "By the by there was with me yesterday a remarkable young man with whom I travelled a few years ago, and who was a school-fellow of your son's. To him the *locale* of those lines is very familiar. He says you perhaps will not recollect him, though he remembers you and yours so well. His name, Layard. He recognized at once the pool, as I did the myrtles." I may add the mention of another of Landor's kindest friends, Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, with whom Robinson and Wordsworth passed a month at Rome. "She fell in love with the poet, calling him, however, a dear *old man*; and has promised to spend a month with him at Rydal Mount." She died, alas, in less than two years: not visiting England again.



goes hard with me to think it of him, when I hear that woodlark yonder, gushing with joyousness, or when I see the beautiful clouds, resting so softly one upon another, dissolving . . . and not damned for it."

Yet is it no merely one-sided view thus taken of the great Florentine, for never by any single hand has he had censure and praise dealt out to him in such equally exalted measure; if indeed the doubt may not arise whether censure itself be not only another form of praise, when it has the character of greatness that often accompanies it here. "Alighieri is grand by his lights, not by his shadows; by his human affections, not by his infernal. As the minutest sands are the labors of some profound sea or the spoils of some vast mountain, in like manner his horrid wastes and wearying minutenesses are the chafings of a turbulent spirit, grasping the loftiest things and penetrating the deepest, and moving and moaning on the earth in loneliness and sadness." And again how finely it is said, that "he is forced to stretch himself, out of sheer listlessness, in so idle a place as Purgatory: he loses half his strength in Paradise: Hell alone makes him alert and lively: there he moves about and threatens as tremendously as the serpent that opposed the legions on their march in Africa."

The more delicate graces of this astonishing genius are at the same time not overlooked:—

"All the verses that ever were written on the nightingale are scarcely worth the beautiful triad of this divine poet on the lark:—

‘La lodoletta, che in aere si spazia,  
Prima cantando, e poi tace contenta  
Dell’ ultima dolcezza che la sazia.’

In the first of them do not you see the twinkling of her wings against the sky? As often as I repeat them my ear is satisfied, my heart (like hers) contented."

Nor his claim to be remembered as a master of pathos. It is here Petrarca who speaks, after celebrating his friend's power over the affections:—

"My nature leads me also to the pathetic; in which, however, an imbecile writer may obtain celebrity. Even the hard-hearted are fond of such reading, when they are fond of any; and nothing is easier in the world than to find and accumulate its sufferings. Yet this very profusion and luxuriance of misery is the reason why few have excelled in describing it. The eye wanders over the mass without noticing the peculiarities. To mark them distinctly is the work of genius; a work so rarely performed, that, if time and space may be compared, specimens of it stand at wider distances than the trophies of Sesostris. Here we return again to the *Inferno* of Dante, who overcame the difficulty. In this vast desert are its greater and less oasis, Ugolino and Francesca di Rimini."

Very opportunely observed too is the distinction, most necessary to be remembered, between the prosaic treatment of an appalling subject and such treatment as Dante's. What is horror in prose be-

comes terror in poetry, and in the most dreadful circumstances the soul is kept from sinking by the buoyancy of imagination.

"The sunshine of poetry makes the color of blood less horrible, and draws up a shadowy and a softening haziness where the scene would otherwise be too distinct. Poems, like rivers, convey to their destination what must without their appliances be left unhandled: these to ports and arsenals, this to the human heart."

But, above all, Dante receives in this book the supreme distinction which belongs to him pre-eminently, which removes him far beyond the reach of either the praise or censure that may now be applied to him, and sets his name "on a hill apart" with the three, or at most four, out of all known literatures, which are imperishable on earth.

"I cannot but think again and again how fruitlessly the bravest have striven to perpetuate the ascendancy or to establish the basis of empire, when Alighieri hath fixed a language for thousands of years and for myriads of men: a language far richer and more beautiful than our glorious Italy ever knew before in any of her regions, since the Attic and the Dorian contended for the prize of eloquence on her southern shores. Eternal honor, eternal veneration to him who raised up our country from the barbarism that surrounded her! Remember how short a time before him his master Brunetto Latini wrote in French; prose indeed; but whatever has enough in it for poetry has enough for prose out of its shreds and selvages."

Nor is Dante the only attraction of the book, which would indeed be poorly represented without something also of the wealth of thought and fancy that with almost boundless variety of illustration enriches its principal theme, and which one or two selections may help to show, though they show it badly.

#### MIDDLING MEN AND GREAT MEN.

"Middling men, favored in their lifetime by circumstances, often appear of higher stature than belongs to them; great men always of lower. Time, the sovran, invests with befitting raiment and distinguishes with proper ensigns the familiars he has received into his eternal habitations: in these alone are they deposited: you must wait for them."

#### DEATH'S ALLEVIATIONS.

"*Petrarca*. O Giovanni, the heart that has once been bathed in love's pure fountain retains the pulse of youth forever. Death can only take away the sorrowful from our affections; the flower expands; the colorless film that enveloped it falls off and perishes.

"*Boccaccio*. We may well believe it: and believing it, let us cease to be disquieted for their absence who have but retired into another chamber. We are like those who have overslept the hour: when we rejoin our friends there is only the more joyance and congratulation. Would we break a precious vase because it is as capable of containing the bitter as the sweet? No: the very things which touch us the most sensibly are those which we should be the most reluctant to forget. The noble mansion is most distinguished by the beautiful images it retains of beings past away;



and so is the noble mind. The damps of autumn sink into the leaves and prepare them for the necessity of their fall: and thus insensibly are we, as years close round us, detached from our tenacity of life by the gentle pressure of recorded sorrows."

#### SUPERFICIAL AND CENTRAL WARMTH.

"There are few in any other country of such easy, grateful, unaffected manners as our Italians. We are warmer at the extremities than at the heart: sunless nations have central fires."

#### POETRY'S HIGHEST REACH.

"A good satire or good comedy, if it does not always smile, rarely and briefly intermits it, and never rages. A good epic shows us more and more distinctly, at every book of it we open, the features and properties of heroic character, and terminates with accomplishing some momentous action. A good tragedy shows us that greater men than ourselves have suffered more severely and more unjustly; that the highest human power hath suddenly fallen helpless and extinct; or, what is better to contemplate and usefuller to know, that uncontrolled by law, unaccompanied by virtue, unfollowed by contentment, its possession is undesirable and unsafe. Sometimes we go away in triumph with Affliction proved and purified, and leave her under the smiles of heaven. In all these consummations the object is excellent; and here is the highest point to which poetry can attain. Tragedy has no by-paths, no resting-places; there is everywhere action and passion."

#### GREATNESS IN POETRY.

"Amplitude of dimensions is requisite to constitute the greatness of a poet, beside his symmetry of form and his richness of decoration. . . . We may write little things well, and accumulate one upon another; but never will any be justly called a great poet unless he has treated a great subject worthily. He may be the poet of the lover and the idler, he may be the poet of green fields or gay society; but whoever is this can be no more. A throne is not built of birds'-nests, nor do a thousand reeds make a trumpet."

#### PRIVILEGED PLAGIARISTS.

"A great poet may really borrow; he may even condescend to an obligation at the hand of an equal or inferior; but he forfeits his title if he borrows more than the amount of his own possessions. The nightingale himself takes somewhat of his song from birds less glorified; and the lark, having beaten with her wing the very gates of heaven, cools her breast among the grass. The lowlier of intellect may lay out a table in their field, at which table the highest one shall sometimes be disposed to partake: want does not compel him. Imitation, as we call it, is often weakness, but it likewise is often sympathy."

#### CRITICS.

"There are critics who, lying under no fear of a future state in literature, and all whose hope is for the present day, commit injustice without compunction."

## PRAISING JOHN TO SPITE THOMAS.

"*Petrarca*. Why cannot we be delighted with an author, and even feel a predilection for him, without a dislike to others? An admiration of Catullus or Virgil, of Tibullus or Ovid, is never to be heightened by a discharge of bile on Horace.

"*Boccaccio*. The eyes of critics, whether in commending or carping, are both on one side, like a turbot's."

## ROME.

"*Boccaccio*. When I was in Rome nothing there reminded me of her former state, until I saw a goose in the grass under the Capitoline hill. This perhaps was the only one of her inhabitants that had not degenerated. Even the dogs looked sleepy, mangy, suspicious, perfidious, and thievish. The goose meanwhile was making his choice of herbage about triumphal arches and monumental columns, and picking up worms; the surest descendants, the truest representatives, and enjoying the inalienable succession, of the Cæsars. This is all that goose or man can do at Rome. She, I think, will be the last city to rise from the dead.

"*Petrarca*. There is a trumpet, and on earth, that shall awaken even her."

## THE PILGRIM'S SHELL.

"Under a tuft of eglantine, at noon  
I saw a pilgrim loosen his broad shell  
To catch the water off a stony tongue;  
Medusa's it might be or Pan's erewhile;  
For the huge head was shapeless, eaten out  
By time and tempest here, and here embost  
With clasping tangles of dark maidenhair.  
'How happy is thy thirst! how soon assuaged!  
How sweet that coldest water this hot day!'  
Whispered my thoughts; not having yet observed  
His shell so shallow and so chipt around.  
Tall though he was, he held it higher to meet  
The sparkler at its outset: with fresh leap,  
Vigorous as one just free upon the world,  
Impetuous too as one first checkt, with stamp  
Heavy as ten such sparklers might be deemed,  
Rusht it amain, from cavity and rim  
And rim's divergent channels, and dropt thick  
(Issuing at wrist and elbow) on the grass.  
The pilgrim shook his head, and fixing up  
His scallop, 'There is something yet,' said he,  
'Too scanty in this world for my desires!'"

That is one of the many perfect pieces scattered through the book, to which were added, as I have said, five scenes in blank verse, of which the speakers were Essex and Bacon during their quarrel; Walter Tyrrel and William Rufus immediately before the king's death; the Parents of Luther shortly before his birth; and Electra and Orestes in the pieces sent to me from Heidelberg. Every one of these scenes has that vividness and force of reality which gave to all the forms of Landor's writing its mastery of dramatic expression; and there is one in particular, the Parents of Luther, quite unsurpassed for character and delicacy, from the first blushing avowal of the young mother to her dream about a coming boy that follows, the



naming him Martin because that saint clothed the poor, and the guessing what the dream might portend of the lad's possible rise in life, from chorister to sacristan, sacristan to priest, and priest to abbot, till the father's irrepressible faith and boisterous confidence bursts out, "Ring the bells! Martin is pope, by Jove!" The scenes were dedicated to Southey in a few words, saying that only he and two others, Mr. James and myself, would care for them.

Nor did many more care for the book containing them, which, fascinating as it proved to the few, for the many fell still-born; and at the close of the year of its publication he wrote to me of the fine he had to pay for it. "I have just this moment paid a fine of a hundred and forty pounds to Saunders and Otley for having a hand in printing, and probably of the eighty I still owe them I shall have to pay sixty next year." His letter was from Bath. "It was my intention," he had written to Southey from Torquay a month or two before (18th September, 1837), "to return at the end of the month to Clifton; but a few days since I had a letter from my friend Elton, telling me that he is about to leave that place for Southampton, and his daughter wrote to me a few lines in the same letter very much regretting the scenes of her childhood. I have a great love for Clifton, above all other places in England; yet I cannot endure the sight of flowers or fields where I had ever spent pleasurable hours. So, instead of Clifton, I think I shall go to Bath in the middle of next month": to the very place, that is, where he had spent all the most pleasurable hours of his early life. If the same wisdom had but guided him in all his contradictions! He really liked Bath; the choice was the happiest he could have made; and what led him to it was not the dislike but the love of pleasurable associations, hardly then to be obtruded on Southey. Some very old friends made it still their home, and it had become recently the home of others of later date. Colonel William Napier lived there, with whose brother Henry he had been intimate in Florence; and among its more recent residents were Mrs. Paynter and her children, members of that Aylmer family formerly so dear to him, who had themselves been the visitors last received at his villa before he quitted Italy, and among whom he was to find another Rose,\* happier and not less fair than the first. Here then he pitched his tent; and the city which he would always say reminded him most of Florence became his last English home. I passed with him there his sixty-third birthday, and with hardly an intermission for the next twenty years we dined together on that memorable 30th of January. It was our Calves'-head Club day; though Landor had commonly in hand too fierce a quarrel with some living sovereign, to trouble himself much with one who had paid with life the penalty of his misdoing.

The letter to which I have referred told me also of the recovery of his corrected copy of the published *Conversations* and of the

\* See *ante*, p. 305.

manuscript of the new ones which he had placed in Mr. Willis's hands, which had crossed and recrossed the Atlantic, and at last, not even addressed to Landor, had found their way to Lady Blessington. He had not been sorry to recover them, he said; for though he should not have minded the loss of a volume that had never been published, he did not wish his corrections of himself to be ineffectual. The corrections in this particular copy, however, he found to have been written so badly, and so much interlined, that they would only have wearied out my patience; and he had therefore seriously set about a fresh copy in which many additional insertions had been made that it had required a good deal of attention, contrivance, and delicacy to engraft in the trunk and branches; but the wearisome work, a labor of now many months, would shortly be completed, and thenceforward he proposed to place them, with whatever else he had written, or might write, at my disposal. "I am resolved to hold no intercourse with publishers, to claim no notice from the public, and never even to announce what I have done, am doing, or may do." I already knew his temper well enough to receive this kind of statement at its worth; but at least it was clear that for the sort of intercourse with publishers of which I lately gave an illustration, or indeed for business of any kind requiring prudence and patience, he was dangerously unfit.

His reply to my half-jesting remonstrance was very characteristic. He admitted there was a future day, though probably a distant one, when his books would be rightly estimated, and that it was certainly in their favor not to have been too much extolled. "*Marmion* was at first too much applauded; it is now too much underrated. Such trash of Byron's as the *Giaour* kept women from sleep and almost from scandal, and who reads it now? whereas such lines of his (I forget the title) as 'A change came o'er the spirit of my dream,' few people cared for, yet they live, and will live always. I have no reason to complain, and never did. I found my company in a hothouse warmed with steam, and conducted them to my dining-room through a cold corridor with nothing but a few old statues in it from one end to the other, and they could not read the Greek names on the plinth, which made them hate the features above it. This only amused me; for the guests in good truth had a better right to be displeased with the entertainer than he with them. God grant I may never be popular in any way, if I must pay the price of self-esteem for it. I do not know whether my writings are ever to emerge above those of my contemporaries, but if they do I am sure it will be after my lifetime; and some seem to think they will. Read the enclosed." It was a letter from the author of the *Curiosities of Literature*. It touched a chord of the very earliest years of his life, even the old days of his friendship with Mocatta; and was indeed an expression of opinion he might fairly be proud to receive.

It was dated from Bradenham House, Wycombe, on the 29th Sep-



tember, 1838, and was written after reading the *Pentameron*. Various circumstances, it said, had prevented the writer doing this before. "I have now just closed it, to be opened however hereafter. It has happened to me, from early years in my life, to have been acquainted both with your name and your writings.\* I have been your constant reader. I have never turned over a page of your writing but with a pause of reflection. In the present imaginary conversations you have, if possible, excelled yourself; so perfectly have you personated the spirits of your two great actors, such novelty have you given to a searching and exquisite criticism on the three finest geniuses of modern literature. You have shown the caustic smile of Petrarch on Dante; and surely Boccaccio himself would have laughed heartily, as at least I did, at the lovely girl so kindly watchful over our corpulent sentimentalist girthing his mule. All that you have written has been masterly, and struck out by the force of an original mind. You have not condescended to write down to the mediocrity of the populace of readers. You will be read hereafter. I know not whether you have written a century too late or too early: too late, if the taste for literature has wholly left us; too early, if the public mind has not yet responded to your sympathies. Believe me with great regard faithfully yours, I. D'Israeli."

### III. WRITING PLAYS.

Thirteen days after the date of Mr. D'Israeli's letter, on the 12th October, 1838, I received what follows:—

"He who sprains an ankle breaks a resolution. I sprained my ankle a week ago by treading on a lump of mortar which a beast of a mason let drop out of his hod in Milsom Street. It twisted under my leg, and down I came. Nevertheless I resolved to walk home, after I was picked up, two gentlemen having run across the street and helped me: for as to getting up by my own efforts, that was out of the question. With great difficulty I reached my lodgings. And now for the breach of resolution I have committed. I am a great admirer of Mrs. Jameson's writings. So I sent on Saturday night for her *Female Sovereigns*. On Sunday after tea I began a drama on *Giovanna di Napoli* (God defend us from the horrid sound, *Joan of Naples!*); and before I rose from my bed on Monday morning, I had written above a hundred and seventy verses as good as any I ever wrote in my life excepting my *Death of Clytemnestra*. Of course I slept little. In fact, I scarcely sleep at all by night while the people of my brain are talking. While others are drinking I doze and dream, and sometimes snore peradventure; at least those have told me so who know best. Now not a word to any one about this drama, which I promise to send you before a month is over. Since the first day I have done nothing in the composition of it, so many people have been calling on me. However, nobody shall come in before two nor after three for the future. But I must return the calls as soon as I can get out, and these are grievous losses of time. It is odd enough that I had written a good many scraps of two *Imaginary Conversations* in which *Giovanna* is a speaker; but I cannot remember a

\* See *ante*, p. 84.

syllable of them, nor would they do. She and Vittoria Colonna are my favorites among the women of Italy, as Boccaccio and Petrarca among the men. But to have clear perceptions of women, to elicit their thoughts and hear their voices to advantage, I must be in the open air, in the sun, alas! in Italy, were it possible. My sprained ankle will not let me take my long and rapid strides. I am an artificial man. I want all these helps for poetry. Quiet and silent nights are the next things needful. How happy is Southey, who can do all things better than any of us, and can do them all in the midst of noise and interruption! He is gone into Brittany. May he return in health and spirits. . . . God bless you. Do not think it necessary to condole with me on my sprain."

Five days later came the following. I had meanwhile, after expressing my delight that out of such a nettle as a sprain he was plucking the flower of a tragedy, endeavored to point out to him that a drama, if it meant anything, should mean what could be acted; and that if he had not something to say which the theatre would enable him to say best, it was unwise to adopt a form that surrendered obvious advantages without corresponding return.

"My drama will never do for the stage. Besides, why should I make so many bad men worse? Is there any poet, beside Southey and perhaps our Paracelsus [Mr. Browning], who would not suffer from blue devils at any success of mine? The best of our living dramatic writers, Sheridan Knowles, gets grudgingly praised. I would not be mobbed, present or absent. Even Macready's genius and judgment can hardly bring together half a dinner-party to see living Shakespeare. Yet Shakespeare not only keeps poetry alive, but Christianity. When people see one inspired man, inspired to delight and elevate them, they may believe that there may be another inspired and sent to save them from the devil. My scenes fall in the natural order. What is *plot* but *trick*? However, my team is strong enough to carry my materials from one part of the field to the other, if need be. You must tell me about it. You shall not have any of it before you have the whole; and it shall not be a fortnight first."

The promise was kept; all the scenes composing the tragedy known afterwards as *Andrea of Hungary* were in my hands on the 2d of November; and the subjoined characteristic letter accompanied them:—

"Conceived, planned, and executed in thirteen days; transcribed (the worst of the business) in six. Any man, I am now convinced, may write a dozen such within the year. The worst of it is in anything dramatic, such is the rapidity of passion the words escape before they can be taken down. If you lose one, you lose the tone of the person, and never can recover it. Desperation! And the action is gone too. You have a dead man before you, — but galvanized.

"How a sprained ankle helps a poet in getting over the ground! It should not have hindered me, had the weather been finer, and the walks less slippery, from creeping along through my favorite lanes, and inhaling the incense round the dying hawthorn-leaves, the viaticum of their departure. They quit the world without sprained ankles, happy souls!

"Make the best of my phantasmagoria; shift the glasses as you will, and toss as many of the figures as you will aside. I will have no further con-



cern or thought about the matter. I have enjoyed my sunshine once more in pleasant Italy, and am ready for my siesta. If your opinion is a favorable one let me hear it, — *se no, no*, as the Arragonese say to their king.

"By the by, I am half a Carlist. I would rather the Biscayans were independent and free than all the rest of the Spaniards; they are the very best people upon earth, not excepting the Tyrolese.

"Write me one line as soon as you receive the parcel. My hodge-podge was completed on Friday night just before twelve.

"I have not had leisure to count the verses. There should not be many more than 1,800; at least there are not, if I remember, in tragedies or mixt dramas. However, I have weeded out and weeded out, and have rejected as much as would furnish any friend for another piece — as good as this.

"Any of my worthy critics may tell me that I do not know the difference between an act and a scene. Very true; I have said something about this in my Milton and Marvell.\* So, I have merely markt out the scenes, as they are called, and leave the acts to the curious. I had myself a fanciful division of them into five; but their length was not symmetrical by any means. Now adieu, my dear friend; I have given you but a tough and dry radish as a whetting for your entertainment.

"A capital prologue has this instant come into my head, if hereafter the piece should be licked into shape: —

No prologue will our author's pride allow;  
If you can do without it, show it now.

"Observe, I have made Andrea rather tolerable: at last rather interesting: quite uneducated: ductile: but gentle-hearted, compliant, compassionate, and, above all, a graceful rider. These qualities, taken together, are enough to make a sensible woman of great generosity *love him even*. Such a woman would be more likely than another. I never knew a very sensible woman, once excepted, love a very sensible man. There never was one who could resist a graceful and bold rider, if there was only one single thing about him which would authorize her to say, 'It was not merely for his horsemanship.'

"In the characters generally I have avoided strong contrasts. These are the certain signs of a weak artist. There are however shades of complexion, diversities of manner, and degrees of height. It would be ridiculous to tell you this after you have read the thing; less amiss, before."

Hardly had I written what I thought of the scenes, or suggested what seemed to me required for their orderly arrangement, when tidings of another completed portion reached me; second of a trilogy on the theme he had chosen. I had written on the 3d of November; and five days later had this startling announcement: —

"Thursday, November 9. — Your praises, which came this day se'nnight, created the last drama I shall ever write. It contains about 1100 verses.

"I only write now to tell you that I completed (just before dinner) the second of my trilogy. I will not ever write the third, though I have a scrap or two for it. No, the easy part, the part that anybody else would have taken, shall be left for somebody to try his hand against me. Giovanna is absolved by Rienzi, and returns to Naples. Let another kill her: let another make her cry out against the ingratitude of Durazzo. Unluckily I have not the life of Rienzi. I had it in Italian by a contemporary. What

\* And see *ante*, p. 237.

was his wife's name? Was he married? Had he a mistress? Pray let me know; perhaps I may want it, but probably not. I am a horrible confounder of historical facts. I have usually one history that I have read, another that I have invented."

Observing so resolute an asseveration that he would never write the third in the trilogy, I half expected to receive it before even the completion of the second; but I had to wait a little. On the 13th of November he wrote again:—

"Gratifying as your praises are, I like your objections still better, and would rather have the utmost of your severity. My division of the acts (an arbitrary one) would probably be the same as yours. The first would contain 366 verses, the second 255, the third 448. My fourth was inordinately long; my last little more than one scene. I want you to make some insertions in the first, where the queen speaks of her husband to her sister Maria, and afterwards to her foster-mother Filippa. After 'I will earn,' paste in—

*Maria.* How can we love—

*Giovanna (interrupting).* Mainly by hearing none  
Decry the object; then, by cherishing  
The good we see in it, and overlooking  
What is less pleasant in the paths of life.  
All have some virtue, if we leave it them  
In peace and quiet; all may lose some part  
By sifting too minutely bad and good.

Where Andrea follows Fra Rupert, after 'he went in wrath,' I would add

He may do mischief, if he thinks it right;  
As those religious people often do.

And where Filippa says that he deserves their pity, let this follow:—

*Giovanna.* O, more than pity. If our clime, our nation,  
Bland, constant, kind, congenial with each other,  
Were granted him, how much more was withheld!  
Sterile the soil is not, but sadly waste.  
What buoyant spirits and what pliant temper!  
How patient of reproof! how he wipes off  
All injuries before they harden on him,  
And wonders at affronts and doubts they can be!  
Then his wild quickness! O, the churl that bent it  
Into the earth, colorless, shapeless, thriftless,  
Fruitless, forever! Had he been my brother,  
I should have wept all my life over him:  
But being my husband, one hypocrisy  
I must put on, one only ever will I.  
Others must think, by my observance of him,  
I hold him prudent, penetrating, firm,  
No less than virtuous: I must place myself  
In my own house (now indeed his) below him.

*Filippa.* I almost think you love him.

*Giovanna* He has few,  
Even small faults, which small minds spy the soonest;  
He has, what those will never see nor heed,  
Wit of bright feather, but of broken wing;  
No stain of malice, none of spleen about it.  
For this, and more things nearer . . . for the worst  
Of orphanage, the cruelest of frauds,  
Stealth of his education while he played,  
Nor fancied he could want it; for our ties  
Of kindred; for our childhood spent together;  
For those dear faces that once smiled upon us



At the same hour, in the same balcony;  
 Even for the plants we reared in partnership,  
 Or spoiled in quarrel, I do love Andrea.  
 But, from his counsellors!

"The Second Part is more regular; but in this the first act is longer than any of the rest: it contains 448 verses. Yet the whole piece is little more than 1,100, I think; but I have not counted farther than I have transcribed, which is only one page beyond the first act. If you should really be contented with the First when your changes are made, you might ask Macready whether he thinks it adapted to the stage, and whether *he* can suggest any improvement. We English have done less for the stage in the last two centuries and a quarter than any other nation in Europe; less than an acted tragedy in a century! The best, I think, since *Venice Preserved*, are *Virginus* and the *Hunchback*. We want the coming-out of character: we want more than side-faces. In a grand historical picture all the faces must not be painted in profile, nor all the figures come with the best leg foremost."

His next letter, four days later, brought me more of the scenes of the second play, and some inserted passages of extraordinary beauty. I at first doubted whether it was right thus to exhibit a work of art in the process of construction, with its scaffolding around it; but as with *Count Julian*, so here, both the character and the genius of Landor receive illustration from the intimate view thus afforded, not merely of his rapid and impulsive composition, but of the rare power he possessed in putting into his numberless additions, insertions, and corrections, into his second and third and fourth and twentieth thoughts, all the heat and glow of his first noble fancy. The inspiration has never dropped. There is nothing finer in the tragedies than the after-insertions sent in these letters.

"You shall not be disappointed in my *Rienzi* as far as vigor goes. I represent him as a very imperfect character; he was so. His wife, or mistress, whichever was the best of the two, says great things to him, when, after Giovanna's appeal to him against the charge of having murdered her husband, he wavers on equity for the sake of maintaining his power, saying that since his rise many friends have fallen from him:—

*Wife.* Throw not off the rest.  
 What! is it, then, enough to stand before  
 The little crags and sweep the lizards down  
 From their warm basking-place with idle wand,  
 While under them the drowsy panther lies  
 Twitching his paw in his dark lair, and waits  
 Secure of springing when thy back is turned?  
 Popular power can stand but with the people:  
 Let them trust none a palm above themselves,  
 For sympathy in high degrees is frozen. . . .

*Rienzi.* Peace, peace! confound me not.

*Wife.* The brave, the wise,  
 The just, are never, even by foes, confounded.  
 Promise me but one thing. If in thy soul  
 Thou thinkest this young woman free from blame,  
 Thou wilt absolve her, openly, with honor,  
 Whatever Hungary, whatever Avignon  
 May whisper or may threaten.

*Rienzi.* If my power  
 Will bear it; if the sentence will not shake  
 This scarlet off my shoulder—

*Wife.* Cola! Cola!

I have made the changes you wished at the deaths of Caraffa and Caraccioli, and you must add to where Andrea says 'he is gone':—

To think of this; to think how he has fallen  
Amid his pranks and joyances, amid  
His wild heath myrtle-blossoms, one might say,  
It quite unmans me.

*Sancia.* Speak not so, my son:  
Let others, when their nature has been changed  
To such unwonted state, when they are called  
To do what angels do and brutes do not,  
Sob at their shame, and say they are unmanned:  
Unmanned they cannot be; they are not men.  
At glorious deeds, at sufferings well endured,  
Yea, at life's thread snapt with its gloss upon it,  
Be it man's pride and privilege to weep.

This week I shall transcribe little more" (the first two acts came with the letter); "before the end of next, you shall have the whole. Should not the title of the first be *Andrea*? the second, *Giovanna*?—Or *Giovanna of Naples*? and the other, *Andrea of Hungary*?"

I had not had time to reply when the following day brought another letter. "The packet was sent to the coach-office, and my letter in it; and now, five minutes afterwards, I find I am about to trouble you again, as usual. In fact I seldom write *straight on end* as the hunters say, or in the house, but generally while I am walking or riding, or sitting out in the air; sometimes in a very small pocket-book, sometimes on a scrap of paper. Do, in your long-suffering, paste in this where Giovanna and her sister are together, and she talks of life being made almost as welcome to her as death itself. The other will reply:—

When sunshine glistens round,  
And friends as young as we are sit beside us,  
We smile at Death . . . one rather grim indeed  
And whimsical, but not disposed to hurt us . . .  
And give and take fresh courage. But, sweet sister,  
The days are many when he is unwelcome,  
And you will think so too another time.  
'Tis chiefly in cold places, with old folks,  
His features seem prodigiously amiss.  
But Life looks always pleasant, sometimes more  
And sometimes less so, but looks always pleasant,  
And, when we cherish him, repays us well.

And when, in the first part, they are talking of the good King Robert, I would have this:—

*Fiammetta (to Filippa).* Have you not praised the king your very self  
For saying to Petrarca, as he did,  
'Letters are dearer to me than my crown,  
And, were I forced to throw up one or other,  
Away should go the diadem, by Jove!'

*Sancia.* Thou art thy very father. Kiss me, child:  
His father said it, and thy father would.  
When shall such kings adorn the throne again?

*Fiammetta.* When the same love of what Heaven made most lovely  
Enters their hearts; when genius shines above them,  
And not beneath their feet."

On the last day of November the whole of the second tragedy was in my possession, and I had sent him further objections to portions



of the first which it seemed desirable to alter. His reply came next day : —

“Your objections are so admirably just, that it is almost a shame to deprive the world of them; yet I resolved from the first moment to abolish the whole scene of the old women; there is quite enough without it. Draw your pen unsparingly over every other passage that in any manner is discreditable to me. I wrote the songs in Italian because it is so incomparably easier than English, in which Moore alone writes short things gracefully. Mine were on a level with what are sung about the streets at Naples and elsewhere. There are so many conspiracies in tragedies, that nothing new could be devised. I have varied the old scheme by the diversified tones and feelings of Pseim and the other two Hungarians, then of Maximin, then of Caraccioli and Caraffa. My frate Rupert has a slice of old Falstaff in him, not very perceptible. He is never at fault: this is the resemblance. Beside what you have shown me, I can find only to alter, the bringing back the queen dowager to take her seat with Giovanna when audience is given to the nobles; and, on the queen saying she would call round her all the good and wise, I would have King Robert’s widow overhear those words as she returns.

*Sancia (returning).* Daughter, no palace is too small to hold them.  
The good love other places, love the fields,  
And ripen the pale harvest with their prayers.  
Solitude, solitude, so dread a curse  
To princes, such a blight to sycophants,  
Is *their* own home, their healthy thoughts grow in it.  
The wise avoid all our anxieties:  
The cunning, with the tickets of the wise  
Push for the banquet, seize each vacant chair,  
Gorge, pat their spaniel, and fall fast asleep.

In the scene toward the close, where Andrea speaks of the mulberries, it should be, ‘I wish the mulberries were not past,’ because they not only were ripe, but over by above a month, in Naples; the marriage being on the 20th of September. The greater correction of substituting English for Italian I finished before I sent away my breakfast, and you will see it at length on the opposite side. You are right in what you say of the theatre. I shrink from the acting. We will give up that idea, both for one and other of the dramas; and as to printing, you know I said openly I would publish no more.”

What I replied on this latter point Landor took as good-naturedly as Benedick when rallied on his change of intention, and the tragedies were printed without waiting for completion of the trilogy. Few know anything of them; but enough, even in these letters, has been shown of their singular and exceptional beauty of thought and language, to justify such further explanatory words as may increase the reader’s interest in them. They have no single figure of such grandeur of conception as *Julian*; but in another kind I doubt whether *Andrea* may not claim a place as distinct and separate, nor in a lower rank of poetical creation. Poetry has indeed few conceptions more touching than this boy-prince. Of Giovanna Landor takes the favorable view, as it was fairly open to him to do. She is to Italy what Mary Stuart is to Scotland, and different judgments of her will always exist; but any man may be justified in taking her character

from the two Italians who were the most illustrious of her contemporaries, — Boccaccio, who calls her the singular pride of Italy, so gracious, gentle, compassionate, and kind, that she seemed rather the companion than the queen of those around her; and Petrarca, who, in a strain hardly less affectionate, compares her and her young husband, surrounded by the Hungarians, to two lambs in the midst of wolves. Nor is that a bad description of Landor's first tragedy.

What indeed no one disputes to have been her position on the death of her grandfather, gives warrant for the view taken by Landor. Ill-fated as the marriage was, it originated in King Robert's desire to compose the differences between Naples and Hungary by restoring the throne of Naples to the elder branch in the person of Andrea, without prejudice to the existing rights of Giovanna; but several years after the betrothment he discovered that Andrea, placed by the king of Hungary under the sole care of a wicked monk, had grown up into his helpless victim; indolent, idle, pliant, half silly it was supposed, certainly altogether ignorant; and it was resolved, as a protection to the youth, that Giovanna should be proclaimed queen in her own right. She was however but fifteen when the king died, Andrea being seventeen; and, by the time of her accession and marriage, the monk fra Rupert had so employed the two years' interval of regency in supplanting Neapolitan by Hungarian influence, that Giovanna and Andrea were become little better than his prisoners.

At this point the tragedy opens; and with the greatest delicacy the position of both queen and husband is expressed perfectly in the first scene. She, with wonderful beauty, is already a woman in fulness and generosity of soul, and wise beyond her years; he, a mere boyish stripling, is in mind and manners more boyish still, but ductile, gentle-hearted, compliant; and it is the triumph of Landor's achievement to have shown the influence of two such characters on each other. One sees that her expression of love at the outset is but a sweet hypocrisy; indeed she loves another; but she is so bent on being true to Andrea that her tenderness and compassion, trembling only on love's outermost verge, soon borrow from his glad simplicity and sprightly fondness something of his own affection; and still, as his mind opens under love for her, and new beauties of disposition respond to her influence over him, her own eyes brighten more and more. But there is of course little for the stage in this; nor has the play otherwise the kind of contrasts required by tragedy. There are indeed plenty of shades of complexion, and diversities of manner, to show the artist; no one could mistake Sancia's gentle wisdom for the lofty intellect of Filippa; but the women are all so good and so generous that it takes a second reading, such as one cannot have at a theatre, to understand the niceties that separate each from the other; and, for even the motive that leads to the catastrophe, the same sort of study is required. In actual life this, no doubt, would be enough. We should want no more than our knowledge of the



probable effect upon the mind of fra Rupert of the growing change in Andrea. But we cannot thus receive things for granted on the stage ; we want a plot ; character and motive must be in visible collision ; and it will not do to have the agents of a catastrophe in as much apparent unconsciousness as ourselves of what they have in hand, until the catastrophe itself is upon us. This is the case with fra Rupert's Hungarians. They prowl about the court avenues and entrances like hungry wolves ; each with his mark upon him ; Zinga not to be mistaken for Klapwrath, or Psein for Maximin ; but all of them mere shadows of something else, of which neither they nor we know anything except by remote suspicion. A power opposed to fra Rupert's might fairly have been found in the two gallant Neapolitan nobles who love Giovanna ; but they are killed in the third act, and he remains the solitary genius of the scene. That this is what in life might have been probable does not of course dispose of the question of the stage ; here, as in *Julian*, Landor fails in its necessary requirements ; yet there are no finer studies in dramatic writing than are afforded by both, in the rich fulness as well as easy flexibility of the verse, in the extraordinary beauty of the detached thoughts and sayings, and in the individual traits of character. The very want of passion in his wickedness which repels interest from fra Rupert in these earlier plays, and altogether unsuits him for the stage, helps to make him a wonderful creation, as we follow and track him out in the study. Present or absent, he is master of the scene. We see his horrible shadow, if not himself. We think him baffled by the modest firmness of Giovanna, or the light-hearted resistance of Andrea, but already his web encircles both. By the unexpected defiance of Caraffa and Caraccioli, we fancy him struck to the earth ; but as he steals out from his cell through one passage, their lifeless bodies encumber the other. Resource never fails him. When all seems gay and joyous in the revels at Aversa, and we half incline to think the danger past, his crooked figure disguised and masked crawls in, joy gives place to terror, the lights at the brilliant balcony are extinguished, and displacing suddenly the roses and festoons suspended there, the lifeless body of the poor Andrea swings heavily down. Even after the scene has closed we do not know the actual murderer. As in ordinary life, though not in ordinary tragedies, doubt remains with us. We know the heart that prompted, but not the hand that did the deed. There is nothing so fine as all this in the second part of the trilogy, which yet contains single passages superior to any in the first, and has a scene of Rienzi and his wife that would act greatly on the stage. This middle play is wholly occupied by Giovanna's appeal to the Pope and the Tribune, by her exculpation from the charge of Andrea's murder, and by her second marriage. Fra Rupert is on the scene, endeavoring to fix suspicion on Giovanna ; but he plays an unimportant part.

Hardly had the *Andrea* and *Giovanna* appeared however, with inti-

mation that the profits of the publication were to be given to a very humble but very noble heroine of that day who lives also in the page of Wordsworth, Grace Darling,\* when I received an intimation from him that he was busy on the last of the trilogy, of which fra Rupert was to be hero.

"Being here alone for several days" (written from Bath in the autumn of 1840), "I was resolved to do what I was told would be very difficult, if not impossible: to give a little more interest to the character of Giovanna after her second, nay even after her third marriage. Certainly it is somewhat unromantic and unpoetical. Racine, in his *Andromache*, has made sad work of it, although he had but two to deal with. I had indeed maliciously lain in wait thus long for somebody to attempt it. Well, I must do it myself, I see. I have written now the last drama of the trilogy; imperfect no doubt, as you will discover, but better, I promise you, both as poetry and drama, than the two first. You will like what one of my characters says on reading Dante's story of Francesco da Rimini:—

Piteous, most piteous, for most guilty passion.  
Two lovers are condemned to one unrest  
For ages. I now first knew poetry,  
I had known song and sonnet long before:  
I sailed no more amid the barren isles  
Each one small self; the mighty continent  
Rose and expanded; I was on its shores.

I felt something like this when disposing at last of my old friar. You shall see. But mind, I will not be damned for it. In other words, it shall never be offered to the stage. Popularity is not what I want, or care for. I have received from it all the pleasure and gratification I ever can receive; tender emotions, sweet and strong excitement, and the hope that it will communicate these to others."

The manuscript reached me a few days later, with what follows:—

"Well, now I have netted my purse, have I drawn the two ends together as they should be? Have I kept up the frate's character, changing only by the change of fortune and pressure of circumstances? It was requisite to show Giovanna as mother and friend. Thus her character is completed by a few touches. Stephen and Maximin I hope and trust are not too light. It was the custom of the Athenian dramatists to make the last piece in the trilogy a farce, or farcical. This is the only thing in their literature inelegant or injudicious. We imitate it in some degree, by acting an after-piece to our tragedies. This, however, is not quite so bad, though bad enough."

I found a fair reason for this exulting tone on reading the play. My preachments to him on stage requirements had not been without effect. This was the most dramatic of the three. Not so rich in poetry, and having fewer single sayings conspicuous for beauty; but with greater vigor of treatment, with characters more broadly contrasted, and with a hero not tragical in guilt alone, but also in remorse and suffering. It made a corresponding impression on those who read it; nor did any opinion expressed of it please Landor more, or

\* "... One whose very name bespeaks  
Favor divine, exacting human love ...  
Whom ... a single act endears to high and low  
Through the whole land."  
Wordsworth.



with better reason, than his brother Robert's. "I cannot say" (Bir-  
lingham, 26th December, 1840) "that anything which you have writ-  
ten since has given me more pleasure than *Pericles and Aspasia*; for I  
am unable to imagine greater strength and originality of thought  
united with greater elegance and purity of language than that book  
contains. But I rejoice nevertheless at the publication of these dra-  
mas as fresh evidences that your powers are increased by time.  
Many men appear to have larger capacities and greater reasoning  
powers than they had in the middle of life, even at a greater age than  
yours; but I can remember no instance beside, at such an age, where  
the imagination was more energetic, and its manner of expression  
more original. I will not suppose, that in giving me your *Fra Ru-  
pert*, you have also given a right to trouble you with my opinion;  
but I must say that it appears a far greater work than *Count Julian*,  
written just thirty years ago. The power of communicating so much  
meaning beyond what is expressed directly by words, is the most ex-  
traordinary difference." Crabb Robinson had struck the same note,  
eight days before, in contrasting the unimpaired power of *Fra Rupert*  
with the many instances that were happening around to impress him  
with "a sense of the danger to which all genius is exposed of decaying  
prematurely"; Mr. Macready told him that the last part of the tril-  
ogy had taken stronger hold of him than either of its predecessors;  
Mr. James wrote with boundless enthusiasm of all the three; Julius  
Hare, more temperately describing his delight at receiving such a  
visitor "through the snow" to cheer him with visions of Neapolitan  
warmth and beauty, said to Landor that it now rested with him,  
Henry Taylor, and George Darley, to "preserve the life of tragedy in  
England"; and George Darley himself, whose fine dramatic genius  
well deserved that compliment, asking him where he got the power  
that gave to his commonest words an effect so magical, singled out,  
amid infinite praise of the last of the tragedies, those very portions \*  
referred to by Landor as "light," but it was hoped not farcical, in his

\* The scene especially delighted Darley, where the wily friar wins to his black pur-  
pose Stephen the farmer. Stephen is fond of the substantial:—

"Pleasant, too, are farms  
When harvest-moons hang over them, and wains  
Jolt in the iron-tinged rut, and the white ox  
Is called by name, and patted ere pulled on."

But as to the uses, or *quid pro quo*, of money, the farmer differs from the friar rather in  
seeming than reality:—

"*Rupert.* Don't squander all away. Few know  
Its power, its privilege. It dubs the noble,  
It raises from the dust the man as light,  
It turns frowns into smiles, it makes the breath  
Of sore decrepitude breathe fresh as morn  
Into maternal ear and virgin breast.  
*Stephen.* Is that all it can do? I see much farther.  
I see full twenty hens upon the perch,  
I see fat cheese moist as a charnel-house,  
I see hogs' snouts under the door, I see  
Flitches of bacon in the rack above.

*Rupert.* Rational sights! fair hopes! unguilty wishes!"

letters to me. I should perhaps add, with deference to so great an authority, that my old friend appears to have been in error in supposing that the third drama in a Greek trilogy was ever farcical. He probably confounded with it the satirical play subjoined to the trilogy, for the most part by way of contrast, though it might sometimes be connected with it in subject. The only remaining example of a part of a trilogy belonging to a continuous theme is the *Eumenides*; but, as it is plain that the *Prometheus*, the *Seven against Thebes*, and *Suppliants* of Æschylus must all have been the middle dramas in trilogies, we may fairly derive from them what must have been the subjects of the third plays, and that they must all have been grave, solemn, and reconciling.

What I have to add, in quitting the subject of Landor's tragedies, concerns his brother Robert equally with him; but the facts to be stated have a curious interest apart from their illustration of character, and may be related by Mr. Robert Landor himself without comment from me. I will merely premise that to his above-quoted letter of thanks for *Fra Rupert*, it was added, as what people call a strange coincidence, that he should have heard of dramas printed by his brother while printing some of his own. "Two of them have been written many years, and were the amusement of hours which I could not employ more usefully, for I can sometimes write when I cannot read. This indeed is no reason for publishing them; but a book may serve as a small legacy, better adapted than any other to remind those whom you have known in early life of your thoughts and feelings. I will direct that a copy shall be sent to you without requiring that you should read one half of it. Nevertheless I am vain enough to think that, as tragedies generally are now, the first of them may prove worth the trouble." What Landor thought of them will be seen hereafter. Not in the first only, *The Earl of Brecon*, but in the last, *The Ferryman*, there is enough to give the writer distinguished place among the poets who have written in this form; and a volume altogether of purer English or loftier purpose, "high passions and high actions" more worthily describing, has seldom issued from the press in England than *The Earl of Brecon*, *Faith's Fraud*, and *the Ferryman*: "Tragedies by Robert E. Landor." But the writer's first dramatic attempt had been of earlier date, and the anecdotes now to be related have no reference to the publication of 1841.

"There is a strange history," wrote Mr. Landor to me (26th January, 1865), "of which you have heard nothing, and for which I am unable to account. Among Walter's later publications, perhaps the most original and powerful, certainly the most characteristic as a specimen of his genius, his poetical genius, are the three tragedies published in 1839-40; and, however unsuited to the drama for representation, very admirable as poems. When we first met after their publication, at Birlingham, I asked whether he was aware that a tragedy had been published, without preface or author's



name, the plot of which must seem to have been borrowed in many of its scenes from his *Andrea of Hungary*. However different in all other respects, however poor and feeble the apparent imitation, yet, besides many of the scenes, some of the events and some even of the names corresponded. Both tragedies were dated at Naples, and both in the royal palace. The characters were principally the royal family. There was a conspiracy in both, and the conspirators were monks. The catastrophe was in the palace, at a masked ball; and in both, though language was never copied, there were many of the same passions, emotions, and other smaller correspondences of description, especially in this masked ball. My brother was much surprised: supposing that some audacious imitator had borrowed the only part within his reach; much of the plot, some of the characters, but none of the power; many of the incidents and contrivances, but none of the genius. His astonishment was still greater when I referred him to the title-pages of both tragedies: *his* publication being dated 1839, and the supposed copy 1824, just forty years from this now present time. Greater yet was his wonder, when I told him that I was the author of this supposed imitation, written almost twenty years before the original, and published sixteen. It happened that we were interrupted by some visitors before he had time to finish my work, or there could be any explanation on the subject; and he never afterwards referred to it, nor did I. Southey had noticed, in his *Doctor*, what he called a family likeness; and my brother has been often mortified by the mistake of one for the other. Infinite as the difference may be in ability, there may be some resemblance in feeling and the mode of expressing it; but this would not account for the mechanism, the plot, the many correspondences of the two tragedies. My brother indeed would never have borrowed consciously from any man and least of all from me; but I know that he continually forgot what he had written, and denied (till they were produced) that he had ever seen various passages in his printed books. Possibly he may have read this tragedy of mine, without any remembrance afterwards that he had seen it; or met with a review of it without knowing who had written either the tragedy or the criticism, for at that time we had no correspondence or communication; and so, many years after, he may have mistaken memory for invention.

“Thus much has been said by me to account for his denial, on many occasions, of what he had himself written. A lady, with whom he had become acquainted through me, used to prepare for his visits by reading such of his publications, verse and prose, as contained moral and philosophical maxims, or thoughts beautifully and pointedly expressed. Mingling them with other quotations, she recited very correctly on one occasion what he had so written; and in return, he complimented the lady by supposing that she had composed them, declaring that no one else could have equalled them! and at the last, while he avowed that he had utterly forgotten them, protesting

that even still he could hardly believe he had himself written them, — *which I believe to be true.* I have as good a memory as most people who have lived eighty-four years, and I am not careless about the truth ; but I am often reminded by my servants, not only of things forgotten by me, but of intended directions which I had neglected to give. Add to this confusion of memory my brother's activity of imagination, and much will be accounted for. Fact and fancy become also easily confounded ; and there are infirmities, apart from those of old age, for which none of Walter's friends could otherwise account, but by wanderings permitted to the imagination."

"You ask," Mr. Robert Landor wrote again to me (12th February, 1865), "whether the tragedy to which I had referred in proof of my brother's imperfect memory was the *Count Arezzi*? As there is an introduction to this curious history which may help in explaining it, I will venture on your patience once more. I had written the tragedy two years earlier than the date in the title-page (1824), not knowing who would undertake its publication. At last it was intrusted to Mr. Booth of Duke Street, Portland Place. Mr. Booth had a relative connected with one of the theatres, to whom he showed the manuscript ; and this gentleman was on familiar terms with Mr. Young, a tragic actor of high reputation, contemporary with Kean, I think : but no one knows less of the theatre than I do. Mr. Young thought that the principal character, Arezzi, might be undertaken by himself ; he wished that the more comic part, Cimbella, should be committed to one of the Kembles, either Charles or Stephen ; and he said that if the author would allow him to make such reductions and alterations as were necessary, he would bring it on the stage. Never having had the slightest thought of its representation, I at once declined the offer ; and thereupon it was published, at the close of 1823, without any name. Mr. Booth was as much surprised as I was at its success, a large part of the edition being very speedily sold ; it was also favorably noticed in several critical papers ; and Mr. Booth informed me that if I proposed to make any change or corrections, I must prepare them for a second edition. At the same time he said that inquiries and rumors had reached him, supposing the tragedy to have been written by Lord Byron : and I had seen, in one of the reviews, that probably it was an experiment on the public taste by a distinguished author, whose other tragedies were composed with motives and feelings totally different, but who would soon reveal himself. All Lord Byron's dramas had been published before ; *Werner*, the last of them, less than a year before. At once, then, my success was accounted for ! I was so unjust as to suspect that Mr. Booth had encouraged the report, or at least permitted it by his silence. But not wishing to partake in a fraud from which both Lord Byron and the public must suffer, I immediately directed that the tragedy should be again advertised, with my name ; and also that there should be a title-page prefixed to all the copies that were yet



unsold. Mr. Booth remonstrated earnestly, disclaiming all knowledge ; but as the copyright was mine, I prevailed. I cannot tell how many copies remained, but I do not think that, in the forty years since then, so many as forty more have been sold. I was extinguished at once. To be sure, Lord Byron survived ; but it may be doubted whether he would have forgiven any man who had confounded the authorship of two such dramas, even supposing them to have been written experimentally. These of my brother are as unlike mine (excepting in the instances arising from a bad memory), and, I think, as much superior to *Werner* as *Werner* is to the *Count Arezzi*. But it seems scarcely possible to account for so many resemblances in the mechanism, without supposing that Walter may have read either my tragedy or some account of it ; and, many years after, may have mistaken memory for invention. Assuredly he had no knowledge of the author, or suspicion of him ; but, after having read most of the drama, and learnt from me its history, he never said another word on the subject. It is to free his character from distressing imputations that I have given this long history. He continually denied that he had written what was to be found in his own books, or spoken what had been heard by twenty people. He once related to me a long conversation with a friend of yours, with many minute particulars, on a very important subject ; and two years after, when it was referred to by me accidentally, he declared that nothing of the kind had ever occurred, and that I must have dreamed. Your history of him must excite much attention, because it is yours ; and perhaps some passing observation on this infirmity might anticipate what it would not be very possible to disprove, or otherwise to account for."

#### IV. REVIEWING A REVIEWER.

Any remark upon the question thus raised by Mr. Robert Landor I have not thought necessary. The likeness of the later to the earlier tragedy, apart from that indefinable likeness to each other which would seem to have been as inseparable from the poetry of the brothers as it often is from the voices of sisters singing, turns chiefly on the management of the catastrophe in each ; and, though raising the strongest presumption that Landor had seen his brother's work, is only of interest for the illustration to which his brother applies it. That is just, unquestionably ; and of the fact that such failures of memory involved no wilful departure from truth, strongly insisted on by me in former pages, there occurred soon after the present date an example as decisive as could be given. Upon *Blackwood* making some objections to his *Pericles and Aspasia*, he had sent back to his publishers, as we have seen, every shilling paid for the copyright ; yet, only three years after a proceeding so remarkable, he had forgotten, not merely that anything had ever been paid him for the book, but, more marvellous still, that he had himself sent the money back. "I published *Pericles*

and *Aspasia* on my own account," he reiterated; and was sending further remittances in satisfaction of the supposed loss, when I stopped him by a statement from Mr. Saunders himself.\*

Nor was it his failing commonly to remember a review that might have vexed him, any more than the turn his vexation might have taken. With a sharp violent word all generally was over; and he knew no comfort in life so great, he would say, as to get safely delivered of a curse. Even that he could sometimes spare, and be content, as when told of the *Quarterly* reviewing him soon after the *Pentameron*, with wondering where they would find their telescope, or with declaring, from accounts sent him a little later, that the glasses were all it wanted. But he was really anxious that his own discredit with the reviews at this time should not extend to his brother's tragedies. "The literary congress have condemned me to St. Helena," he wrote to me, "but I hope my name will cause no prejudice to my brother's. For a quarter of a century we have had no correspondence until now: the last was an angry one. However, he has shown himself by far the greatest dramatic poet of our time." It is right to add that whether he thus quietly accepted the treatment extended to himself, or wasted anger on it, it was the rarest of all possible things with him to venture upon anything like reply. There are only two instances known to me in which he attempted it; and, by a remarkable chance, though both replies were written, both were suppressed, and now for the first time both see the light. I have printed one, in a former page, written sixty-eight years ago, after *Gebir* was noticed by the *Monthly Review*; and am now about to print the other, written thirty-one years ago, after the *Pentameron* was reviewed in the *British and Foreign Quarterly*, which, as I was the means of inducing him at this time very reluctantly to lay aside, I have now less scruple in publishing. It is an admirable specimen of his manner, and is filled with illustrations of his character and opinions.

His first mention of the review was in a letter to me at the close of 1838:—

"I am told there is an ill-tempered and captious article in the *British and Foreign Review* on my *Pentameron*. I began to look into it when it came, but I have not had time to go on with it. They tell me it is Hallam's. Unless he talks of poetry, he is not likely to talk like a blockhead. But he praises some lines of Milton as very superlative which have little harmony, and, with an ear that seems to have been cut out of the callus of his heel, he compares with Catullus those wretched Latin versifiers among the modern Italians; fellows in whom is no vigor of thought, no novelty of expression. He might have acquired some information on this matter, if

\* "Never in the course of my life," he wrote to me, "was I so surprised as at the verification of my account with Saunders; for such it is. Certain I am that no part of the money was ever spent by me, nor can I possibly bring to mind either the receiving or the returning of it. But never in my lifetime have I kept any accounts, and every autumn I save something, because, in the months of December and January, I give to poor families half the income of those two months. A person unerring in her judgment and boundless in her goodness helps me to find them out."



he had read what is printed at the end of my Latin poems. He would at least have found a pretty sprinkling of their false quantities, puerilities, and tomfooleries; and that praise also is given wherever a hand is lifted high enough to reach it."

I at once doubted the alleged authorship. Not that I differed greatly from his estimate of the admirable critic of history and somewhat questionable critic of poetry to whom he ascribed the review, except that he underrated his learning; but I knew they had met (I think at his friend Sir Charles Elton's), that he had come off second-best in argument, as most people did with Hallam, and that a hasty judgment in the present matter would be a very natural consequence. Landor had laughingly repeated to me what Lord Dudley told Francis Hare, of his having dined with Hallam and his son in Italy, when "it did my heart good to sit by, and hear how the son snubbed the father, remembering how often the father had unmercifully snubbed me"; and I perhaps had too much fear that upon some such principle he was now doing his own heart good. With great difficulty I kept back what he subsequently sent me for the printer; and I certainly afterwards had reason for questioning one argument I had confidently employed in proof that Hallam could not have written the review. But whether this was so or not, little matters now. The personal bitterness is passed away, and a publication which now can give pain to no one will probably give pleasure to many.

"Certainly this review of my *Pentameron* was not done in the same spirit, or with the same judgment, or by the same author as the previous remarks on my *Imaginary Conversations* in the same periodical, *The British and Foreign*. Heavy boys never play well at leap-frog; and the broader the back is over which they attempt to leap, the greater must be their exertion, or the greater will be their failure.

"Hear what this heavy boy says: —

"‘Mr. Landor's *entire* sympathies are with the ancient *rather* than with the modern world.’

If they are entirely with the one, they have nothing at all to do with the other: the ‘rather,’ then, is an impropriety, an absurdity. The fly buzzes about Mr. Landor's pineapple just as alertly as if it could penetrate its bosses, and taste its flavor.

Vix tenuis pervenerit aura.

"‘Homer and Aristotle, Ovid and Cicero, are his *divines*, in spite of the commendation he bestows on Hooker and Barrow.’

This is false and foolish. I certainly do prefer Homer and Aristoteles to Hooker and Barrow, the former in range of intellect, the latter both in the range of intellect and in the spirit of investigation; but neither in *divinity*: Ovid and Cicero still less.

"‘The *native* impulse and bias of his intellect is, in argumentation, towards the palpable, the practical, the orderly, rather than to questions of *higher* intellectual pith and moment.’

Certainly: for such is the office and tendency of intellect. But what is ‘*higher pith*’? I am willing to be carped at by such empty mouths for pre-

ferring what Bacon preferred, 'the palpable, the practical, the orderly,' to this indigestible 'pith,' and this intractable '*moment*'; while as to Aristoteles and Homer, never were two ampler minds or stored with better things, and how *palpable*, how *practical*, how *orderly* are both! Ovid is scoffed at here, as schoolmasters and reviewers have scoffed at him from time immemorial. Shall I tell them a secret? There are four pieces of epic poetry far transcendent above all others; and I will mention them in the order of dates: the colloquy of Achilles and Priam in the *Iliad*, the contention of Ulysses and Ajax in the *Metamorphoses*, the first book of *Paradise Lost*, and the battle in *Marmion*. But there are single acts in Shakespeare worth all these put together.

" 'Mr. Landor *believes himself to be*, and is frequently represented as, an uncompromising Democrat!'

False again, at least in the first position. Mr. Landor entertains as much contempt for the Democrats as for the Whigs, but he loves all liberal opinions, all liberal institutions, all liberal men. His few friends are chiefly Tories, and he would be loath to change the least valuable of them for a dozen of those ring-droppers who stand opposite. There are indeed some in power who have been friendly and even familiar, but his only wish in regard to them is that they may retain their integrity, which is easier lost than place. He cannot but remember that among the Whigs there was a Rockingham, a Charlemont, and a Grattan; and he will not close his eyes on those benches on which are yet sitting a Clarendon, a Fitzwilliam, and a Newport. Nor are these the only disinterested, the only judicious men of the party. But there are too many far different, too many who cry out to the people, You wanted a movement: so did we: shuffling is our natural gait; and is not shuffling a movement?'

" 'Plato is the *cynosure* of Mr. Landor's *dislikes*!' [strange expression!] 'and the philosopher who has exhausted the admiration and *taxed* the powers of the most subtle thinkers in every age is *represented* in the *Imaginary Conversations* as an inexact reasoner, inconsistent in his doctrines, and luxuriant and rank in his diction.'

One passing remark on the word *tax*. It often means *imposition*. The passages in which the powers of the philosopher are thus '*represented*' are quoted by me in the original Greek: is there a single instance in which they are *misrepresented*? It would be easy to adduce at least fifty more, beside those in the *Chesterfield* and *Chatham*, in the *Plato* and *Diogenes*. No injury is done to the greatest writer, or the best man, by showing his defects and inaccuracies. I have shown very many in Bacon himself, even in the small volume of his *Essays*, and I have detected a vast number more, equally indefensible, in his other and larger works. In the *Barrow* and *Newton* I passed over several objections, mindful in what character I was standing. Enough had also been done, regarding Plato, to urge the loiterer to plunge into deep water for wholesome exercise instead of staying to catch cold and fever among the dank luxuriance on that slippery brink. Such men as my critic should reverence Plato, and do no more: but there are others, Bacon for instance, and Newton, who are permitted to weigh him; and these may praise him where praise is due, which itself is no light privilege, and where censure is due may reprehend him. Rising from this task and going away again, I just pointed with my forefinger to that obscurity which appeared so mysterious and so sacred, where are deposited in disorder and dismemberment the spiced abortions of an illusory meretricious philosophy. The spell of tradition must be very strong on that man who believes in the *Phædo*, and in all that is said of it. Its arguments are sophistry, and



its eloquence is dithyrambic. But this the English reader now enjoys an opportunity of judging for himself, since Shelley has translated that dialogue, who knew the Greek, who loved his author, and who alone, of all our writers, comes up to him in the suavity of his language.

“When Bacon was declared in the college halls to have subverted the Aristotelian mode of philosophizing, he was strangely misrepresented. Aristoteles, as well as himself, subjected the immaterial to demonstration, the material to experiment; the main difference between them being that the Greek was the wiser man of the two, in not projecting all his wisdom out of himself, but reserving a good part of it to employ in the guidance of his own life and actions. He and Bacon were both aware that light in some matters touches only the surface, and in none goes far beyond; and that the same may be said of philosophy. But light, according to the substance it penetrates, hath its fixt and certain boundaries; and philosophy its imaginary lines, which future discoveries may extend. For the attainment of this purpose, we must walk on along paths both beaten and unbeaten; we must stop often, examine closely, discuss freely; and we must not lie upon our backs with our mouths agape for dreams, nor believe we are pious because we are puerile, nor be confident and certain we imbibe the freshest wisdom because we catch it out of the deepest shade.

“In the *Pentameron* Dante, though upon the whole *less an object of distaste*, being saved from rough treatment not, as in the *Inferno*, by getting upon Virgil’s back, but by the transcendent beauty of particular passages of his *Vision*, is equally misapprehended in the connection, the transitions, and the scope of his immortal work.”

Now to ask the simplest question in the gentlest tone: Is not this rather impudent? And who, pray, is the author of such remarks? Some Shelley, best and most congenial interpreter of Plato’s dreams? some Coleridge, poet, metaphysician, dialectician, and critic? some Southey, to whom nearly all European languages are open, all poetical secrets known? some Carey, long conversant both with Plato and with Dante, and profound in the philosophy of the schoolmen?

Velim pol! inquis, at pol ecce rusticus!

“Acute and comprehensive as Mr. Landor’s intellect unquestionably is, and nurtured and instructed with

Soul-sustaining songs of ancient lore,  
And philosophic wisdom clear and mild,

it is nevertheless potent within a certain circle only.’

Really! and pretty well too! for no human intellect, not even Bacon’s, rose up to and penetrated *all* circles!

“It flags and falls whenever the idea of the infinite, whether as a postulate in philosophy or as a fact in theology, is presented to it.”

No such thing: it neither flags nor falls, but turns its back upon it, well knowing the folly of pursuing what cannot be reached, and grasping at what cannot be comprehended. Mr. Landor was never such a mischievous idler as to set folks about searches in dark places for vain and useless objects, telling them that the wind, which he knows must blow their candle out, will direct them. People like our critic sing out the school-boy’s canticle, to which Aristophanes seems to have set the music:—

Open your mouth and shut your eyes, and see what God will send you.

We remember what the godsend in such cases was usually composed of; and Plato’s is often but little more. Shelley praises him for being the first

who laid down the doctrine that states ought to be governed, not by the strongest or the wealthiest, but the wisest. Do we not, however, collect this doctrine from Homer, both in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*? And Homer's temperate wisdom would also have shown him clearly that such rulers are rarely to be found in elective governments, where eloquence, wealth, and valor will usually captivate, and often mislead the ignorant; of which description the great body of voters always has been and always will be composed. These never can know the most virtuous, whom they seldom have any opportunity of conversing with, and whom they would dislike the more for it. The great body of mankind wants and will find excitement, and either will avoid, or trample down, those enclosures of wisdom and virtue in which are cultivated only sedatives.

“ ‘We suspect however,’ &c.

‘Figaro là, Figaro là, Figaro quì, Figaro quà.’ *We here, we there, we everywhere.* What a *wee* figure do all these *we*'s make!

“ ‘We suspect, however, that Petrarca, or rather his present mover and mouthpiece, the author of the *Pentameron*, has not considered with sufficient accuracy the *Divina Commedia* in reference to its *position in the scale* of imaginative and initiatory works, the *time of its composition*, the life and education of its author, and its different effects upon contemporaries and posterity.’

Strange confused language! this *position in the scale*! and *scale* of what? ‘Imaginative and *initiatory* works.’ What works are those? Petrarca, whom I represent speaking of Dante, must have known what effect he had on his contemporaries pretty nearly as well as a Marybone critic in the year of Victoria's coronation, but certainly he knew somewhat less about the effect he was to produce on remote posterity. In fact, his business was only with the positive and demonstrable faults of the poem, on which his friend Boccaccio was going to deliver a course of lectures in the city of Florence.

“ ‘Æschylus went into *banishment* because he could not endure a rival.’

He never went into banishment at all: and this accusation of jealousy is grossly injurious, against one of the most honorable of men, and, with a sole exception, the most animated and sublime of ancient poets. Undoubtedly he was pained at being thrust down from the eminence he first had occupied and had held for many years. He left a country where his merits were less acknowledged for one where nobody could contest them. But his nature was ever averse from envy, and he probably was as tolerant of Sophocles and of Euripides in poetry as he was of Miltiades and of Themistocles in war. Sophocles was fortunate in coming forth when his countrymen were in the enjoyment of victory and peace, and fully at leisure to admire the equable polish and commodious structure of his dramas. He may be said figuratively to have lived under Jupiter; Æschylus under the Titans. Sophocles is the only Athenian who worthily describes the character of women. His *Antigone* and *Deianira* are such as Shakespeare himself would never have repented of creating; yet it is in his female characters that Shakespeare's might and dominion is the most especially displayed, and where his predecessors and his contemporaries (deficient in all essentials) are most deficient. If you collected all the poets of the world together, with all the men they ever produced, you might perhaps raise a showy and imposing, not however a formidable, coalition against Shakespeare; but his *women* would beat them instantly from the field.

“ ‘It is an error to suppose that Dante considered the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* as a string of satires, part in narrative, part in action. The satire *that is found* in the *Commedia* has more the sound of the *scourge* and fetters than of the *whip*.’



Faith! a curious kind of satire to sound like *fetters*! And it requires a better ear than either of those the critic's nightcap covers to distinguish the sound of a *scourge* from the sound of a *whip*.

“‘Considering the vast and varied ground of the *Vision*, there is not enough of either *national or individual* satire —’

Evidently he means ‘of satire on nations or individuals’; but the expression is not English or sense —

‘to render it likely that Dante intended to compose a succession of invectives.’

Dante has done it, however, and to a greater extent than ever was done before or since in any one serious poem: and Dante was not a man likely to do what he never intended, to miss his aim, to fall short of it, or to overshoot it. He wished to be a satirist, and a satirist he was, but by no means of the best description. Of satire there are two kinds, assuming various forms. Comedy takes the higher of these; in which Aristophanes is the most poetical, Shakespeare the most humorous, and Molière the most facetious and witty. Among the Romans are Plautus and Terence, clever copyists of tame originals, but holding the keys which open the storehouse of all that is sound and precious in latinity. Of another species are Catullus and Horace; of whom the first has the stronger wing, the last the oilier feather. But among the same people are two far different from these, Lucretius and Juvenal. Juvenal is coarse and obscene, but always masculine, sometimes poetical. Lucretius is much loftier, and not only than Juvenal, but than all other of the Roman poets. He points alike to the crowd of the puny and pusillanimous, and to the smaller and more contemptible of the turbulent and ambitious, not with the painted stick of a constable, but with the laureate truncheon of a commander. Take, for instance, the commencement of the second book, and the termination of the third, resounding like the brazen portals of some vast temple solemnly closed behind us.

“‘Ovid is an *established* favorite with Mr. Landor. He puts into Boccaccio’s mouth somewhat extravagant praise, when he is made to say, “I do not think Ovid the best poet that ever lived, but I think he wrote the most of good poetry, and, in proportion to its quantity, the least of bad and indifferent.” Our own *experience* would lead us to invert this sentence, and to say that, considering how much tedious and vapid verse Ovid wrote, it is marvellous he should have produced *some* so very good.’

Has Ovid written so much ‘tedious verse’ as the great Lucretius? and yet no reader ever found it marvellous that he should have produced some so very good. Has Ovid written so much both tedious and vapid as the glorious Dante? Certainly not; and yet nobody wonders that Dante has written some, and much, superlatively excellent. The *experience* of the reviewer can help him on but a little way in correcting his judgment of poetry. *Experientia docet* is an ancient adage: *Experientia debuit docere*! is quite as ancient an ejaculation and interjection. The experience of dull scholars, which at best is tradition, can but imperfectly warm the heart that nature never formed for eloquence and enthusiasm. There is much in the character and style of Ovid which his imitator Ariosto has attained, but there is also much which lies beyond him. The faults are easier and more seductive. There is in both the same lax facility of verse, the same indulgence in loose description; but Ovid is more pathetic and more sublime. In regard to Ariosto, he is what Titian is in regard to Albano. His *Epistles of the Heroines*, always much underrated, show a diversity, a distinctness of character, a vigor of thought, a play of imagination, which, had he written no other work, would have entitled him to take his seat very near

the highest of the Roman poets. In all his pieces, in these particularly, he has displayed a species of dramatic power to which no other of them (now extant) has attained; for Livy, who is both more epic and more dramatic, and of a loftier genius than any of them, wrote in prose. Has Ovid, has Lucan, has any one manipulated such balderdash and bombast as the nineteen verses at the close of that invocation which Virgil in his *Georgics* tagged to the plain and modest but solemn prayer of Varro? The invocation was already much too long without them, and together it resembles a Corinthian portico before the thatched habitation of a goatherd. Yet, with defects that place him below the other two great poets of Rome, Virgil has that which within his range is unrivalled. In much of his produce Lucretius is austere and crude: Ovid is over-ripe: Virgil is neither, but seasonable and mature. But, again, to drop the metaphor, Lucretius is more vigorous and more elevated than he, Ovid is more versatile and inventive. Such at least is my opinion of them; and Milton, a higher authority, gave (in respect to Ovid) a similar award.

“‘We have only the rough draught of his best poem.’

This is untrue of the *Metamorphoses*. He would have corrected it, he tells us, *si licuisset*, but it bears no resemblance to a ‘rough draught’; and only a very unpractised eye, a very unpoetical heart, could have thus grossly mistaken it. What a gallery of pictures is here! what a floor of mosaic! what a ceiling of arabesques! Is there any poem, excepting the *Odyssea*, that presents so many figures, so many attitudes, such beauty in such variety? Yet we hear nothing of Ovid but his want of judgment! O that his critics had the thousandth part of it! the millionth of his genius! I cannot but believe that the depreciation of this great unfortunate began with his sentence of exile. It was then thought unsafe to praise him; it is now thought unsound. Such is the hold of authority and tradition on the servile sprinklers and the superstitious catechumens of criticism!

“We have heard enough, but the dogmatical and stupid think we never can hear enough, about the conceits of Ovid. On this subject I have spoken already, both in the *Imaginary Conversations* and in the *Dissertation* appended to my Latin poems printed in Italy, in which I have pointed out worse faults in Virgil, and more of them. If the gentlemen who amuse themselves and the public by their criticisms would take the trouble to peruse this *Dissertation*, it would show them that what some have said is not always what others should say, and that old opinions, like many old things, are sometimes of little value, and nowise the better for wearing. A playful and somewhat petulant and obtrusive puerility, much as it may be reprehended, is less unwelcome in most departments of poetry, indeed in most other places, than a heavy pedantry or an inane bombast; and it would be difficult to find in Ovid a dozen blemishes of the kind imputed to him. I have detected in Virgil at least thirty much graver, and rather more than a just proportion in his elaborate work the *Georgics*; and is that great poet—for great poet he is, whatever the Germans and the germanized may oppose to the assertion of his dignity—is he to be thrust under the monsters that romp in all their wildness on the uncleanly straw now scattered over the Continent? What heart has not been softened by his tenderness? what ear has not been captivated by his harmony? Yet the Virgilian scheme of versification is scanty in final sounds, in which the English seems to be richer than any but the Greek. In truth, it began to be the fashion in Virgil’s day to contract and impoverish what was already too poor and contracted, and to terminate every heroic verse with a dissyllable or trisyl-



lable. Ennius and Lucretius have left behind them memorable proofs what variety, what richness, is given by polysyllabic terminations: but Ovid committed the Virgilian fault in the hexameter, and, pursuing a similar scheme, extended the system to the pentameter. With Catullus and Propertius before his eyes, he yet snipped all the skirts of his *five-feet* brigade to the same measure; dissyllables closed every alternate line; and with what result we know. We are instructed at our schools that an offence against this law is a capital one; and we retain throughout life nearly all the wrong impressions we receive there. Hence the false estimation in which the classics are relatively holden. Hence, forever recorded and repeated, the 'puerility' of Ovid's *Epistles*. Hence the 'sublimity' of the *Pollio*, and the 'majesty' of the *Georgics*, not only in the storm, which is grand indeed, but in its Augustus between the Scales and the Scorpion, in its head of Orpheus cut clean off and singing down the Hebrus, and in its Proteus, an intractable monster grown suddenly tender-hearted and gracefully poetical, concerning a woman of a country he never in all probability could have heard of, and while he was sorely intralled by a stout fellow who came to inquire about a beehive. Hence, in short, the judgment of Virgil proclaimed to be superior even to Homer's, whom no poet ever equalled in it! And judgment is after all the truest criterion of a great poet. For if imagination knows not where to settle, it may almost as well be away; and if characters are inconsistent, they can ill conciliate our interest, and may be at once dismissed. The structure of the *Iliad* is perfect, and the hero is endued with all those qualities which the poem required. The *Æneid*, on the contrary, is 'without form and void,' an epic of episodes, a faded tissue of loose improbabilities; and the hero is more fitted to invade a hencoop than to win a kingdom or a woman. Even Napoleon Buonaparte, whose eyes were seared with conflagrations and besmeared with blood, could discern how Virgil totters at Tenedos and at Troy. His Proteus, his wooden horse, his more wooden hero, are such lumber as never came from the blockhouse of Ovid on the snows of Tomi. How inferior is his Winter to Hesiod's! his Dido to the Medea of Apollonius! Yet gravity and stateliness make men look up to him; and the exquisite harmony of his versification deludes the ear and leads astray the judgment. It is not by single verses that we can learn the scale of our great composer. For the sake of informing my critic how the most harmonious sentence may be constructed of verses in themselves and singly by no means melodious, I will transcribe the most eloquent and thrilling one in all the compositions of this admirable musician.

Mene fugis? Per ego has lacrimas dextramque tuam te,  
Quando aliud mihi jam miseræ nihil ipsa reliqui,  
Per connubia nostra, per inceptos hymenæos,  
Si bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quidquam  
Dulce meum, miserere domûs labentis, et istam,  
Oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem.

"We believe F. Schlegel is correct in saying that naturally Horace had a much deeper and more generous vein of poetry in him than Virgil, and that, had he not strayed early into a wrong path, he might have produced a great national poem."

No poet capable of producing a great national poem ever strayed *inextricably* into a 'wrong path.' But what wrong path did Horace stray into? And what indication has he ever displayed of such a power and tendency as M. Schlegel would exhibit in him? Not the slightest of the kind in all his writings. Yet there are beautiful things in them, of many species. But he wanted power and energy: he was unable to carry shield and buckler throughout a long march; and it was not only on the field of Pharsalia that

he cast them down in lassitude and exhaustion. Even in the compass of an ode he grows impatient of labor, feels it too much for him, and tells us it ill suits the lightness of his lyre. His most heroic one, *Cælo tonantem*, &c., is no proof whatever of his epic qualifications: and nothing can be imagined less pathetic than another which has been often much admired for its pathos:—

Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus  
Tam cari capitis? Præcipe lugubres  
Cantus, *Melpomene!* &c.

He loses a friend and appeals to Melpomene for help to make him cry! The eyes of the true mourner want only their own tears. How greatly more tender and affecting are the verses of Catullus on his brother! which however I am certain will not escape the reprehension of my fine-eared critic for their clumsiness and harshness:—

Multas per genteis et multa per æquora vectus,  
Adveni has miseras, frater, ad inferias,  
Ut te postremo donarem munere mortis,  
Et mutum nequidquam adloquerer cinerem,  
Quandoquidem fortuna mihi tete abstulit ipsum:  
Heu nimis indigne frater ademte mihi!  
Nunc tamen interea, prisco quæ more parentum  
Tradita sunt (tristeis munera ad inferias)  
Accipe, fraterno multum manantia fletu,  
Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale!

These verses, in the sixth of which I have written *nimis* for *miser*, as I think the author did, we carry with us in the throbbing heaviness of our hearts: the others we reject as importunate and fictitious. In vain would you look in these *inferiæ* for anything ornamental or novel. The verses are slow, solemn, sad: there is only one movement in them; a movement from the salt cake and warm milk in its black patera, to the urn containing the ashes of the departed brother. If ever sighs and sobs were heard in the chambers of death, surely we hear them throughout those incondite and uncontrollable words,

Et mutum nequidquam adloquerer cinerem.

“Warton, if I remember, in his essay on the genius and writings of Pope, extols the Galliambic of Catullus above all Roman poetry whatsoever. The praise is a little extravagant, although the Galliambic has indeed a grave and severe majesty about it, such as haunted the forests of Ida and befitted the sanctuary of the great goddess. It is grand and awful, and approaches nearer to the pure ideal of poetry than perhaps any other in any language. But marbles of one cubit in height are never to be compared with the Pallas of the Parthenon, or with the Olympian Jove. The Galliambic, and ten more poems of Catullus, place him nevertheless upon a higher level than Horace, out of whose Odes, at the same time, a far greater number than ten of delightful beauty could be selected. Yet there is nothing in them whereon to ground a supposition that he was capable of constructing ‘a great national’ or other great poem: whereas in Catullus there are ample and satisfactory indications of this ability; for instance, more especially in the description of Ariadne. What is more striking than her first appearance? what is more terrific than her adjuration,

Enmenides, quibus angineo redimita capillo  
*Frons expirantes præportat pectoris iras,*  
Huc, huc adventate!

What is more tender and pathetic than the fifteen verses beginning with  
Certe ego te in medio versantem turbine lethi ?



All this labor of the poet was expended on a piece of tapestry: but for a piece of tapestry were designed those cartoons of Raffael, which, together with the Elgin marbles, are the greatest wealth the arts have bequeathed to England, placing her on an equality, inasmuch as possession can confer it, with Italy herself. But I must return to my reviewer.

“If we are right in ascribing profoundness rather than sublimity, and pictorial power rather than ideal beauty, to the *Divina Commedia* as a whole, *most if not all* of Mr. Landor's objections to *particular* sections and passages will fall to the ground.’

Not one: and how should they? Mr. Landor has no more questioned the sublimity or the profoundness of Dante, than his readers will question whether he or his critic is the more competent to measure them. To judge properly and comprehensively of Dante, first the poetical mind is requisite; then, patient industry in exploring the works of his contemporaries, and in going back occasionally to those volumes of the schoolmen which lie dormant in the libraries of his native city. Profitable too are excursions in Val d' Arno and Val d' Elsa, and in those deep recesses of the Apennines, where the elder language is yet abiding in its rigid strength and fresh austerity. Twenty years and unbroken leisure have afforded to Mr. Landor a small portion of such advantages, at least of the latter; a thousand could pour none effectually into this *pertusum vas*.

“On these grounds and on no other are some of the dooms in the *Inferno intelligible*; for that these *punishments* are in any considerable proportion allegorical we quite disallow.’

Who said they were? in *any* proportion, considerable or inconsiderable. The *dooms*, God knows, are intelligible enough, and require none of ‘these grounds’ to render them plainer. In the *Pentameron* the frequency of them, and the nature of many, are represented as blemishes to the poem and to the poet. So they are. We know whence they sprang: we know, and we lament, that the breast of Dante was ulcerated by his wrongs and inflamed by his passions: but ulcers are ugly things to expose, particularly in the walks of poetry: and loud curses at all who pass by, are but indifferent charms for healing them, even after copious applications from the pitch-pot. My critic would represent me as derogating from Dante. I hope he will understand me, when I tell him in my plainest mother-tongue, that although I do not find the glorious Ghibelline arm in arm with Milton, nor close to Homer, nor within sight of Shakespeare, yet Virgil seems to me a stripling by the side of him. Nevertheless I cannot help crying out, both in his Hell and in his Purgatory,

Quis me gelidis in vallibus Hæmi  
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbrâ!

Poetry should delight throughout, never weary, never disgust. Even pangs and sorrows are blessings from her hand, the visible hand of a true Divinity. The great poets we have brought together are all different, though Dante calls Virgil his master, as Virgil might have called Homer his. Everywhere in Homer there is plenty of bone and sinew, but flesh only in the right place. So much is not to be said of Virgil; and of Dante it is to be remarked that in many places his ill-covered tendons cut through his clothes, and we wish him better fare and a bath. But with what sentiments do we part from him? We embrace, and we will not be shaken off, the hard un-pitying man who swooned at last with pity for Francesca.

“We doubt whether Petrarca, if tried on the whole count of his poetry and his doctrines in an Imaginary Conversation, would fare much better.’

Certainly not, if treated with rigor, or with strict justice. Petrarca had not in him the thousandth part of Dante's poetry; and I was inclined to represent only that which is most amiable in his character. It is glorious to be the willing and disinterested friend of a glorious man, as Petrarca was of Boccaccio, at that time indeed less celebrated than himself, but surpassing in the variety of his invention all the writers that had existed in the world. He was more independent than Petrarca, he was more manly, he was more affectionate. Besides, he was poor, and he was abandoned by those who once had cherished him. Petrarca then, in the midst of those misfortunes, deserves my esteem for loving best the best man of his acquaintance. He was not exempt from vanity, or from its concomitant, selfishness: but, rather than exhibit him in his 'foibles,' I chose to bring him forward in his friendship, and in the company of the friend who most deserved it. In their conversation I was willing also to correct a false estimate of Latin authors. Boccaccio is not, as he appears to our critic, 'hypercritical' on Horace's verse, but correct and just. Our critic may have been taught at sixteen what, in less-confused and complicated language, I was taught at thirteen, that '*obliquo laborat lymphæ fugax trepidare rivo*' meant 'to mark the sinuous and *reactive* flow of a river between curved and winding banks.' But why *laborat trepidare*? Trepidation is incompatible with effort, and labor is incompatible with fugacity.

" 'Whatsoever Mr. Landor does well, he does excellently . . . in his *proper and peculiar path* he is second to no living writer.'

That is to say, Mr. Landor does excellently what pleases the taste of a man without a palate. We all do excellently just as much as coincides with the preconceived opinions of the most ignorant. What is the *proper and peculiar* 'path' in which he is second to no living writer? That, no doubt, in which a cripple on crutches can follow him. If my worthy man thinks of me as of one excellent in anything, decency ought to warn him of the difference between us; and, instead of such a flippant buzz in my ear, even in flattery, he should approach with the slowness of humility, and the taciturnity of respect. Alas! it was on the fertile Egypt, and not on her neighbor the barren Arabia, that the seven plagues descended, of which the most odious were small creeping things.

" 'The following passage we give as a specimen of graceful composition not unworthy to stand by *some* of the descriptions in the *Decameron*.'

There is nothing (except what is good) which is unworthy to stand by *some* of those descriptions. A writer by no means eulogistical acknowledged some years ago in the *Quarterly* that a story in the *Imaginary Conversations*, attributed by me to the person of Boccaccio, is better than Boccaccio could have written. I doubt the justice of the compliment. But my writings have long been at every author's discretion and disposal, as much as the letters of the alphabet, and few have taken any more trouble to utter a word of acknowledgment about it. They all are heartily welcome; and never did any man say with greater sincerity in the full force of the expression, Much good may it do them! Critics have about them a knot of friends and confederates, whom they think it their duty to exalt above all competitors. But why should warm-heartedness swell and degenerate into animosity? why should weaker men be pushed against me, when the shove must hurt them? A great Athenian of antiquity was required to give evidence before a court of justice in favor of a friend; which evidence, to be effectual, must have been false: he replied, 'I will go with my friend as far as the altar.' He would not forswear his conscience. Friendships are stronger now: we are not pagans."



## V. VISITS AND VISITORS.

As long as Charles Armitage Brown remained in England, Landor visited him from time to time at his house near Plymouth: where, in 1837, he found him lecturing the neighborhood on Keats and his treatment by the Reviews; and on Shakespeare and his Sonnets, and the probability of his having visited Italy; as well as otherwise busying himself in writing for newspapers. He does not seem to have made much impression with these lectures, until, with the view of proving that Shakespeare must have had ample means for visiting Italy, he undertook to show that at the age of forty-three the great poet was worth nearly seven thousand pounds: when a burst of glad applause, sudden as a pistol-shot, shook the lecture-hall. Brown mentioned this to Landor as quite a good anecdote in the history of human nature, showing the delight of those west-country folk at the rewards bestowed, even in his lifetime, on the author of *Othello*; but Landor declared with his hearty laugh that it showed only how much better than a wilderness of *Othellos* they comprehended seven thousand pounds. The friends agreed however in most things: and Brown said to Landor, after one of his visits, that all his woman-kind who had seen him had fallen in love with him; that the daughters of his friend Colonel Hamilton Smith openly declared their craze; that it would have to be said of him, as of the other great Warwickshire poet, that no woman could safely go nigh him; and that for his own part he had not been happier when twenty years younger, and with Keats for his companion in that same western county, than Landor had made him in those late "white days" in their walks by the Laira and the Tamar. In the same letter (27th April, 1838), he said he was coming to London shortly, like parson Adams with his sermons, to try and find a publisher for a volume about Shakespeare; and before that year the volume also was out, with dedication to Landor as the best lover of the poet and the best living writer of the English language. Two years later, family hopes took Brown to New Zealand; and not long after his arrival, in the streets of New Plymouth, one of the sudden fits to which he had become subject after leaving Italy closed the life of this kindly original man, whose name cannot be forgotten as long as a reader remains for the most sorrowful story in our language,\* the brief life and pitiable death of the author of *Endymion*.

All who remember Landor at this time will understand, if they have not shared, the delight his visits gave. Brown has only expressed what every one felt. His fine presence, manly voice, and cordial smile, the amusing exaggerations of his speech, the irresistible contagion of his laugh, and the subtle charm of his genius

\* Milne's *Life and Letters of Keats*: a book that one reads with the same miserable anguish of foolish impatience at the decrees of providence, with which such tragedies as *Romeo* and *Othello* are read.

diffused over all, made him quite irresistible. Nor was it possible to have him more at his best than under the hospitable roof of Kenyon, whether at Torquay, where he frequently went at this time, or in London, or in later years at Wimbledon or Cowes. Of this excellent man Southey wrote in 1827 that everybody liked him at first sight, and liked him better the longer he was known; that he had then himself known him three-and-twenty years; that he was of all his friends one of the very best and pleasantest; and that he reckoned as one of his whitest days the day he first fell in with him. Not without strong opinions himself, Kenyon had that about him which repelled no opinion whatever; and to this rare quality Southey hardly did justice on another occasion, when, rallying him on his regret at having no occupation, he told him he was far happier than if sitting on the bench all berobed and bewigged, or flitting like the bat in the fable between the two contending parties in the House of Commons, not knowing to which he properly belonged. It was the fact of Kenyon's knowing well to which he belonged that gave peculiar charm to the catholicity of his tastes and tolerance; nor could his love of pleasure, or his frank confession of the pursuit of it, have other effect than to raise him in the respect of all who knew how much of this consisted in doing good and giving pleasure to others. It is material to add besides, that Kenyon had accomplishments of no ordinary kind, and could give and take with the best who assembled at his table. He wrote manly English verse, was a fair scholar, a good critic of books and art, an observer on whom unusual opportunities of seeing much of the world had not been thrown away; and, in a familiar friendship with him of a quarter of a century, I never saw him use for mere personal display any one advantage he thus possessed. He was always thinking of others, always planning to get his own pleasure out of theirs; and Landor in this respect was an untiring satisfaction to him. He displayed his enjoyment so thoroughly. The laugh was encouraged till the room shook again; and, while Landor would defend to the death some indefensible position, assail with prodigious vigor an imaginary enemy, or blow himself and his adversary together into the air with the explosion of a joke, the radiant glee of Kenyon was a thing not to be forgotten. I have seen it shared at the same moment, in an equal degree, by Archdeacon Hare and Sir Robert Harry Inglis.

Another friend to whom regular visits were made at this time, who had married, during his absence in Italy, an old school and college companion's sister, remembered as long ago as her childhood during happy days at her father's house,\* should not be omitted from my narrative. "Mr. Rosenhagen was of a Danish family," writes Mr. Robert Landor to me (19th May, 1865), "and the son of a clergyman intimately connected, I cannot tell how, with statesmen high in office and influence about the time of Lord Chatham. One son died

\* See *ante*, p. 15; also p. 29.



young, but he had gained the rank of post-captain in the navy. Our friend rose still more rapidly in the Treasury, of which he became first clerk; and was often mentioned in the House of Commons, though he never sat there. From the Treasury he was transferred as private secretary to Mr. Perceval; and he was joined, after the Battle of Waterloo, in the same commission with the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh to negotiate the peace at Paris. His part was especially financial, and he seems to have acquired the Duke's esteem in no common degree. But his attention to business almost entirely destroyed a sight which was always weak, and on his return to England he retired on a pension of twelve hundred a year; having married, as his second wife, the daughter of an old Worcestershire family connected with the Fortescues and Dormers, Miss Parkhurst, whose eldest brother was Walter's school-fellow at Rugby, and went up to the same college at Oxford. Though they were very discordant, they were much together some years later, visiting each other's friends and travelling together; but with old Mr. Parkhurst, Walter was much the greater favorite, and he had been always very happy at Ripple, on the banks of the Severn. Many years had passed away from that time, during which there was no intercourse between the school-fellows. My brother Henry had been often at Ripple, but until the marriage of Miss Parkhurst none of us had seen Mr. Rosenhagen. She reunited the two families while Walter was still at Florence. She and Mr. Rosenhagen had established themselves at Cheltenham, shortly before my removal to Birlingham thirty-six years ago. Till then I had not seen either of them; but, living then at the distance of only fourteen miles, every possible kindness was shown to me. My sisters and nieces were often their guests; and on Walter's arrival from Florence, when you became acquainted with him, he visited both me and them. Mr. Rosenhagen was almost blind and very deaf, but a delightful companion nevertheless. There was no danger of any disagreement between the high Tory and the black Jacobin, between the high churchman and the disbeliever in all churches, for they eschewed controversy, and it would have been very difficult indeed to irritate a man so courteous, so forbearing, and of such easy politeness. Besides a fine person, he had much unassuming dignity, treating with an impressive kindness, even as more than friends and equals, such of his guests as he liked: and he liked Walter greatly. My brother spoke of him in his *Last Fruit* as the best and wisest man whom he had ever known. I think that it was I who suggested this character by saying that Walter may have known some few men of equal ability, some few of equal virtue, but I doubted whether he had seen one man who equalled our friend in both. Very highly and sincerely, on the other hand, did Mr. Rosenhagen value Walter's better qualities; and of the worse he would neither speak nor hear. When quite blind, he lost the best of wives, suddenly (1844). I was with him a few days after her death. 'I have

lost, or am losing, all my senses,' he said, 'but all amounted to very little indeed compared with this loss.' It is now fifteen years since he died, leaving me some very valuable books. He always believed that the *Letters of Junius* were written by his father, but felt no wish to prove the fact." Few names for praise and liking were oftener in Landor's mouth; and in the same year (1840) in which he wrote to me that the Fanny Parkhurst, whom he remembered as an infant, was become the providence of her husband, and that old Parkhurst and his son-in-law Rosenhagen were the men who united most of virtue and most of politeness that he had ever met with, I find a letter from her, acknowledging the gift of his *Fra Rupert* and alluding to some lines in one of its scenes, in which she tells Landor that he had made the "blind but cheerful" old man very grateful for embalming a thought of his in verse so beautiful; that he had received no honor equal to this since the great Duke named him in his despatches; that he had directed her to place the three tragedies on the same shelf with Shakespeare and the Greek tragedians; and that he had long felt his adoption into the friendship of the Landor family as among the happiest consequences of his marriage.

Mention also should be made, among those with whom Landor had frequent intercourse in the earlier years after his return, of Mr. James, who at this time dedicated one of his romances to him, and to whom in Hampshire and on the Dorsetshire coast he made some joyous visits. The kind-hearted and not too vigorous novelist compared himself on such occasions to a still, calm lake brushed by the wing of the whirlwind; and boundless was his enjoyment of the unaccustomed pleasure. "I stagnate when I do not see you," is the cry of his letters, which promise Landor wild-flowers and wood-walks in Hampshire, with hills to ring back his joyous laugh, and, at Lyme Regis, cliffs that will remind him of Italy though of different color. The joyous laugh attracted Thomas Moore too in these days, and he tells us in his *Diary* what a different sort of person Landor was from what he had expected to find him; that he had all the air and laugh of a hearty country gentleman, a *gros réjoui*; and that whereas his writings formerly had not given him a relish for the man, the man now has given him a relish for his writings. To another and finer artist, dear to both of us alike, my old friend had also at this time to sit for a picture which I shall be pardoned for transferring to these pages, since it has added even to Landor's chances of being remembered hereafter. "We all conceived, before seeing him, a prepossession in his favor; for there was a sterling quality in his laugh, and in his vigorous healthy voice, and in the roundness and fulness with which he uttered every word he spoke, and in the very fury of his superlatives, which seemed to go off like blank cannons and hurt nothing. But we were hardly prepared to have it so confirmed by his appearance. . . . He was not only a very handsome old gentleman, upright and stalwart as he had been described to us, with a massive gray



head, a fine composure of face when silent, a figure that might have become corpulent but for his being so continually in earnest that he gave it no rest, and a chin that might have subsided into a double-chin but for the vehement emphasis in which it was constantly required to assist ; but he was such a true gentleman in his manner, so chivalrously polite, his face was lighted up by a smile of so much sweetness and tenderness, and it seemed so plain that he had nothing to hide, but showed himself exactly as he was, incapable of anything on a limited scale, and firing away with those blank great guns because he carried no small-arms whatever ; that really I could not help looking at him with equal pleasure as he sat at dinner, whether he smilingly conversed, or was led into some great volley of superlatives, or threw up his head like a bloodhound, and gave out that tremendous Ha ! ha ! ha ! ” The world did not make this pleasant acquaintance till some years later ; but the Boythorn of *Bleak House* was the Landor of this earlier time, from whose many attractive and original qualities our great master of fiction drew that new and delightful creature of his fancy. In the letter thanking me for my *Life of Cromwell* (April, 1839) Landor had sent his first message to Dickens. “ Tell him he has drawn from me more tears and more smiles than are remaining to me for all the rest of the world, real or ideal.” It cannot be always the Boythorn laugh, in the world either of fact or fancy ; Landor in both had his ample share at all times of the tears as well as of the smiles ; and neither few nor transient were the shadows that fell across his present enjoyments, as well in summer as winter days, from remembrances of Italy.

The change from Fiesole had of course tried him the most in winter. With amusing heat he wrote to me of one of his Bath Novembers : “ We have had only four hours of sun in six weeks ; never since the creation of the world has this happened before.” And this had befallen him after a July which he had thus described to me : “ I could not get salt-bathing quite so near at hand as yours ” (I was then at Brighton) ; “ but I can get a fine fresh bath, or even swim, every day before my window. Never had we such continued rain. I doubt whether there are any trout in the grand canal before my house, but its ripples would tempt any stranger to look over his collection of flies and try his tackle.” Nor was his trouble always from the climate merely, but sometimes from the ill provision made against it. When Francis Hare came over to England the year before his death, and Landor visited him (January, 1839) for the last time at Westwood Way House in Berkshire, he described it as a house that would have done passably well for Naples, but better for Timbuctoo. Everything around him but his friend’s cheerful greeting was congealed ; and into so enormous a bed was he put to sleep, such a frozen sea of sheets stretching out on every side of him, that for once he envied the bed of Procrustes. These were country inconveniences, and town streets were worse. “ In this weather,” he wrote to

me on another occasion (21st December, 1840), "nobody can be quite well. I myself, an oddly mixt metal with a pretty large portion of iron in it, am sensible to the curse of climate. The chief reason is, I cannot walk through the snow and slop. My body, and my mind more especially, requires strong exercise. Nothing can tire either, excepting dull people, and they weary both at once. The snow fell in Italy at the end of November, and the weather was severe at Florence. Lately, from the want of sun and all things cheerful, my saddened and wearied mind has often roosted on the acacias and cypresses I planted. Thoughts when they're weakest take the longest flights, and tempt the wintry seas in darkest nights. How is it that when I am a little melancholy my words are apt to fall into verse? Joy has never such an effect on me. In fact, we hardly speak when we meet, and are at best but bowing acquaintance." It was always so when he thought of Fiesole.

A few months later, after many disappointments in that direction, he heard from Fiesole of a proposed visit to him, and at once eagerly went over to Paris to meet and bring back his second son; when occasion was taken there to show him some civilities that pleased him. "Imagine my surprise," he wrote to me (6th May, 1841), "that any among the literary men knew even of my existence. Nothing can exceed the attention I receive from them. If their civilities are sufficient to make a place agreeable, I ought to be quite contented at Paris. Mignet has invited me this evening to a sitting of the Institut." Victor Cousin was in the chair, Mignet delivered the oration, and Thiers was among those who attended. It was soon after Darmes had fired at Louis Philippe; and Landor mentions his introduction to "Ledru the advocate," whom he describes as having taken the defence of the "wretched fools" who conspired against the king. He was also present at the trial in the house of peers, when he heard "the maddest of all mad regicides, and surely the most impudent," make reply to the chancellor's question if he had any accomplices: "I tell you again, sir, that when I fired at the Duke of Orleans I was quite alone." He called afterwards on Ledru, with whom he found a client that interested him not a little, the celebrated Vidocq; "about sixty years of age, wonderfully strong, and of a physiognomy mild and intelligent: Ledru told me he was so, and very trustworthy; having on a former occasion undertaken his defence on condition of his giving a thousand francs to the poor, when he performed his engagement honorably." Landor's interest was the greater in this new acquaintance from a parallel into which he had been led in one of his letters just before, on reading the Vidocq Memoirs, between "the great thief" the master and "the great thief-taker" the man: one of them frightening all the good, the other all the bad; one betraying all his employers, the other all his accomplices; one sacrificing the hopeful to ambition, the other the desperate to justice: a comparison or corollary to be as easily made in



the seventh of a minute as in seven years, but requiring another century of honesty and wisdom for discovery of which was *best of the two*. The whole race of moral swindlers and ring-droppers would have to be taken up first.

Beyond all others in the great city, however, one visit gave him the greatest satisfaction. Playfully replying to a remonstrance of kind Bath friends against the old hat he had taken with him on his journey, he thus mentioned this visit to Miss Rose Paynter. "Being somewhat hot-headed, is not an old hat likely to fit me better than a new one? I wish you had seen it in all its glory. What think you of my talking with a king and queen, and displaying it before them? Such, in the most legitimate sense, are the Prince and Princess Czartoryski, he having been proclaimed King of Poland by the deputies of the nobility and people. Knowing my devotion to royalty, but probably more attracted by my hat than by me, he conversed with me the greater part of the evening." On his return from Paris with his son, who, upon arrival in London, paid a promised visit to his aunts at Richmond, Landor passed some days with me, while the Whigs were making their last unsuccessful resistance to Peel; and it was in my library, as he always afterwards said, he composed the shortest of all his *Conversations*. It was sent to Kenyon.\* This was the time also, he would amusingly protest, when he failed in the only attempt he ever made on ministerial patronage. He had written to tell Lady Blessington that, now the Tories were coming in and he was growing old, he should like the appointment of road-sweeper from Gore House across to Hyde Park: nobody could dispute his claims, because he had in print avowed himself a conservative; he knew however there must be many names down, and he could wait; only she was to be particular in saying that the place he wanted was for *removing* dirt, or else there might be some mistake. The mistake must have occurred after all, he said, for the thing was not given to him.

He visited, before his return to Bath, the mother and sisters of his wife at Richmond. "I might have expected some degree of shyness, at the least on her mother's part. However, nothing of the kind. Neither she nor any one of her daughters was less cordial with me than they had been formerly. Not a single word on those matters which rendered my stay in Italy quite impossible, and equally so my return to the only habitation in which my heart ever delighted." "Excellent creatures!" he wrote to Kenyon. "They received me

\* *Landor.* Kenyon, I've written for your delectation  
A short Imaginary Conversation.

*Kenyon.* Landor, I much rejoice at the report;  
But only keep your promise — *be* it short.

#### FATHER AND CHILD.

*Father.* What, my boy, is the rhyme to whig?

*Child.* Can it, papa, be whirligig?

with indescribable kindness, and gave me a couple of dormice. These are great blessings." The reader will remember Mr. Boythorn's canary.

## VI. DEATH OF SOUTHEY.

Southey's last letter to Landor was dated at the close of March, 1839. It told his friend that the portrait of Savonarola which he had sent was safely lodged at Keswick : spoke of an epitaph for a proposed monument to Chatterton ; and made another announcement, for which the proper place will shortly present itself. His wife Edith had died two years before, having been for many previous years dead to him ; but, long as the event had been looked for, it fell heavily at last, and it was to help in bringing back some shadow of his wonted cheerfulness that a little excursion had been projected in the autumn of 1838 ; when his old friends, Kenyon, Senhouse, and Crabb Robinson, accompanied him and his son to Paris, through Normandy, Brittany, and a part of Louvaine. " We made a prosperous journey," wrote Kenyon to Landor ; " good weather, good roads, good temper throughout. We travelled five weeks, did all we had intended, and reached Paris on the day we proposed. The only drawback on our journey was that Southey's spirits were not up to the mark, except occasionally, when we passed through the country of Joan of Arc ; and that, not having cultivated catholic tastes, pictures, statues, and streets have not much charm for him. We separated at Paris, which Southey declares he will never enter again, and which I had hardly the heart to quit after a month's stay." Kenyon's letter closed with a whisper of an expected marriage of one of the travelling party, neither himself, nor Crabb, nor Cuthbert, nor Senhouse ; but it was not a thing to talk about till more assured. " Though a very rational match, you heretic ! "

The news being at first not a little startling to Landor, the same kind-hearted correspondent hastened to reconcile his thoughts to his friend. It was no foolish doting, he assured him, no probable or even possible intrusion of a second family among the first ; but rather an act in its nature considerate to those around him. " I know no man so nobly and honorably helpless as to all transactions of this world, all its butcherings and bakings and bankings and fendings for himself (out of a library), as Southey ; and his daughters, I am sure, could never quit him if the consequence were a solitary life for him. Alone, no man would be so pitiable ; and altogether, if a man is to marry again, I should think this a wise match. Never suspecting that he would ever do such a thing however, I asked him the other day whether he had approved or disapproved the marriage of his uncle Hill, who took a wife at sixty. He said, *I approved it.*" Kenyon added something as to the lady ; naming her age, her frail health, and her unconquerable spirit. He had himself been able to judge of her courage and high-mindedness by a truly Spartan letter of hers which



Southey had shown him many years ago. "It was in the time of the stack-burnings, and never was bitter contempt for what she esteemed a cowardly generation of magistrates more strongly expressed than by Caroline Bowles. Southey told me too that in her district they had nominated her for constable, hoping that she would draw off. No such thing. She offered to serve, but they could not for shame swear in a woman. Yet her writings (for, although you and I in our ignorance do not know her works, she is an authoress) are full of beauty, tenderness, and feminine feeling; as her life, I doubt not, has also been. She has for years been a great friend of Southey's, and he has rarely come south without paying her a visit." The impression thus conveyed to Landor determined the course taken by him in some painful disputes that followed; and, sharing his high opinion of some friends of his friend to whom it placed him for a time in antagonism, I thought then, and think still, that he was right. Caroline Bowles deserved all that the good Kenyon says of her, and she forfeited none of her titles to admiration or esteem when she became Caroline Southey. In genius and character she was worthy to have inspired an affection for which she sacrificed far more than it was possible she could ever receive.

Between the time of his return from abroad and the incident of his marriage, Southey wrote to a friend that he had heard of Landor during his last transit through London, and had seen at Kenyon's an excellent portrait of him by a young artist named Fisher. As a picture too he thought it not less good than as a likeness; though the same artist had also painted Kenyon, and made him exactly like the Duke of York. This Landor portrait became the property of Crabb Robinson, by whom it was bequeathed to the National Portrait Gallery; and characteristic as in some respects it is, nor undeserving of Southey's praise, its expression is too fiercely aggressive, and, as Landor himself used to say, its color too like a dragon's belly, to be entirely agreeable or satisfactory. It certainly had more in it of the opening than of the closing lines of the little poem which Landor, during a visit at this time made to me, addressed to its painter.

"Conceal not Time's misdeeds, but on my brow  
 Retrace his mark:  
 Let the retiring hair be silvery now  
 That once was dark:  
 Eyes that reflected images too bright  
 Let clouds o'ercast,  
 And from the tablet be abolisht quite  
 The cheerful past.  
 Yet Care's deep lines should one from wakened Mirth  
 Steal softly o'er,  
 Perhaps on me the fairest of the earth  
 May glance once more."

Not many days later, in March, 1839, he received the letter written by Southey from the house of Caroline Bowles at Buckland, already adverted to, and for which Kenyon had prepared him. "Southey

has written," he said. "He tells me of his intended marriage: that he has known the lady for twenty years; that there is a just proportion between their ages; and that having but one daughter single, and being obliged to leave her frequently, she wants a friend and guide at home. Nothing is more reasonable, nothing more considerate and kind. Love has often made other wise men less wise, and sometimes other good men less good: but never Southey." The marriage followed within a few days; then, a brief interval before the return to Keswick; and then, the mournful close. Of the wisest of our human plans and designings the issues are not ours. The very day that joined newly wedded wife and husband on the threshold of their Cumberland home, witnessed the close on earth of all that was happy in their loving intercourse. The tragedy is to be written in other words than mine.\*

"Come, friend! true friend! join hands with me, he said.  
Join hand and heart for this life's latest stage,  
And that to come unending. I engage,  
God being gracious to me, as we tread  
The dim descent, to be to thee instead  
Of all thou leav'st for my sake! On our way,  
If not with flowers and summer sunshine gay,  
Soft light yet lingers, and the fadeless hue  
Of the Green Holly. Be of courage! Come!  
Thou shalt find friends, fear not: warm, loving, true,  
All who love me. — He said, and to his home  
Brought me. Then sank, a stricken man. . . .

Before his consciousness departed, he had received and read Landor's last letter to him, assuring him of gratitude and affection unalterable. "God, who has bestowed on you so many blessings, and now the greatest of all in that admirable woman who watches over you like a guardian angel, will never let you be forgotten even by the least worthy of your friends; and will vouchsafe to you at last, I hope and trust, such blessings as neither friendship nor health itself is sufficient to afford. If any man living is ardent in his wishes for your welfare, I am: whose few and almost worthless merits your generous heart has always overvalued, and whose infinite and great faults it has been too ready to overlook. I will write to you often, now I learn that I may do it inoffensively; well remembering that among the names you have exalted is WALTER LANDOR." But, for a little while, still the mind was to shine and be visible above the mists and dimness creeping over it. "My and your dear friend," wrote Mrs. Southey, "thanks you for your letter. But, alas! he no longer says, I will write soon to Landor; for when I proposed to answer in his stead, he said, Yes, yes, do so, pray do. Landor has indeed a true regard for me." "You are often with him still in spirit," she resumed after a few days; "his affectionate remembrance of you is

\* The lines that follow are incomplete, but all that can here be used; and are only so used in compliance with the injunction of Landor, from whose handwriting, though not of his composition, I print them. The original, in the writer's own hand, had before been sent to me.



unfading. The volume of poetry still oftenest in his hands is *Gebir*. It lived upon the sofa with us all last week ; and he often exclaimed in delight, struck as by a first reading with something that charmed him, Why, what a poem this is ! If at such times you could see him, you would still see the glorious mind all undimmed in those lustrous eyes of his. He took up his *Book of the Church* to-day, and, turning its leaves over and over, looked up at me and said, Well, thank God, I have written a book that may do good to somebody." Not for long were even such fitful glimpses of the fast-fading intelligence discernible ; but for so long the recollection of his friend Walter Landor remained. "It is very seldom now," wrote Mrs. Southey on the 24th of December, 1841, "that he ever names any person : but this morning, before he left his bed, I heard him repeating softly to himself, *Landor, ay, Landor.*" For many months beyond that Christmas eve life remained, but without that which alone makes it precious ; and it was not until the 22d of March, 1843, Landor heard that at 8 o'clock on the previous morning his friend had passed away. On that day he wrote to me. "Southey's death is announced to me this morning. My reverence for his purity of soul, my grateful estimation of his affection towards me, are not to be expressed in words. But it would grieve me to think that any other man should have testified to the world regret at losing him, before I had done it." These lines accompanied the letter.

Not the last struggles of the Sun,  
Precipitated from his golden throne,  
Hold darkling mortals in sublime suspense ;  
But the calm exod of a man  
Nearer, though high above, who ran  
The race we run, — now Heaven recalls him hence.

Thus, O thou pure of earthly taint !  
Thus, O my Southey ! poet, sage, and saint !  
Thou, after saddest silence, art removed.  
What voice in anguish can we raise ?  
Thee would we, need we, dare we, praise ?  
God now does that . . . the God thy whole heart loved.

It only remains to mention the course and character of the efforts that followed to raise a fitting memorial of this famous man. With characteristic feeling he had himself desired a simple marble slab in Redcliffe Church, bearing upon it his favorite Daniell's proud yet modest lines : —

"I know I shall be read among the rest  
So long as men speak English ; and so long  
As verse and virtue shall be in request,  
Or grace to honest industry belong."

But many difficulties were presented to this ; and, in the end, a memorial was proposed that should take the form of a bust by Baily, with an inscription underneath, to which Landor at once sent twenty

pounds and the inscription. The first was taken, but not the last ; \* which may therefore find a place here.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, BORN IN BRISTOL, OCTOBER 4, 1774;  
DIED IN KESWICK, MARCH 21, 1843.

IN MAINTAINING THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIS COUNTRY  
HE WAS CONSTANT, ZEALOUS, AND DISINTERESTED.  
IN DOMESTIC LIFE HE WAS LOVING AND BELOVED.  
HIS FRIENDSHIPS WERE FOR LIFE, AND LONGER.  
IN CRITICISM, IN DIALOGUE, IN BIOGRAPHY, IN HISTORY,  
HE WAS THE PUREST WRITER OF HIS AGE;  
IN THALABA, KEHAMA, AND RODERICK, THE MOST INVENTIVE POET:  
IN LIGHTER COMPOSITIONS THE MOST DIVERSIFIED.  
RARELY HATH ANY AUTHOR BEEN SO EXEMPT  
FROM THE MALADIES OF EMULATION;  
RARELY ANY STUDIOUS MAN SO READY TO ASSIST THE STUDIOUS,  
TO RAISE THEIR REPUTATION AND TO PROMOTE THEIR FORTUNES.  
  
WONDER NOT THEN, O STRANGER, THAT OUR FELLOW-CITIZEN  
HATH LEFT AMONG US THE RESOLUTION TO COMMEMORATE,  
AND, UNDER THE SAME GOOD PROVIDENCE WHICH GUIDED HIM,  
THE EARNEST WISH TO IMITATE HIS VIRTUES.

Other marble memorials there were too ; but one less perishable remained to be erected, which led to divisions among those who had most loved and been beloved by Southey. Perhaps there never existed, for a suitable and enduring as well as a delightful monument to the memory of a great author, such materials as in this case were afforded by his own letters ; but, upon the question to whom they should be intrusted so much dispute arose, that the writer of the noble poem of *Philip van Artevelde*, whom all should have desired to select, and whom Southey during life had not only chosen to be his executor with his brother, but had singled out as the one man living of a younger generation whom he had taken into his heart of hearts, had no alternative but to impose silence on himself, and leave the task to others. Then was lost to us a book that might worthily have handed down to later generations a conspicuous example of some of the highest qualities that have adorned the profession of literature in England. No one more than Landor deplored this, though in the objections which mainly brought it about he had taken unavoidable part ; and he had certainly no cause to regret that an opinion which he shared with the brother of Southey should have brought him also to the side of Southey's son-in-law, Mr. Wood Warter, the accomplished man by whose careful editorship of his father-in-law's unpublished writings a part at least of the literary debt due to his memory was very shortly to be discharged. To Southey's son was at last intrusted his father's "life and letters."

One of the letters, written upon *Marmion*, which had passed into the exclusive possession of Lockhart, has been brought into promi-

\* "Whether it is placed under the bust," he wrote to the Bristol committee, "is a matter of indifference to me. . . . They who care so little for the most illustrious of their townsmen would be worse fools than they are if they cared for me. Inscriptionem civi optimo meritam atque dignam cives ignavissimi abdendam censuerunt."



nence in the Life of Scott. Towards its close, says Lockhart, "immediately after mentioning a princely act of generosity, on the part of the writer's friend Mr. Landor, to a brother poet, he has a noble sentence which I hope to be pardoned for extracting, as equally applicable to his own character and that of the man he was addressing. 'Great poets have no envy. Little ones are full of it. I doubt whether any man ever criticised a good poem maliciously who had not written a bad one himself.'" The reference was to Jeffrey: but death is a great reconciler; and, in the letter which old Cottle had written to Landor while the subscription for the Bristol monument was in progress, after mentioning that the bishop of the diocese would give when he saw what others gave, that the dean meant politely to remit the cathedral charges, that Sir Robert Peel thought the concern too local but meant to subscribe, and that Lord Brougham was only too eager to do honor to his "old friend," — he had taken pains to add that Lord Jeffrey, above all the rest, had behaved admirably. He had at once requested his name to be inserted for ten pounds, and had characterized Southey as one of the best writers and most amiable and estimable men of our generation: "I do not know," he also wrote at the time to another promoter of the subscription, "into whose keeping the representative dignity of literature, and the jealous care for its interests, are now to go."

Jeffrey there struck the right chord. Not more by the astonishing variety of the studies which were to him the business, exercise, and recreation of a long and blameless life, than by excellence of achievement in all, Southey was the representative man of letters of his day; and the subject to which Jeffrey refers, the position and the claims of writers by profession, had engaged his earliest thoughts, as it was among those that occupied his latest. One of the last to which he gave expression, for example, was his bitter dislike and contempt for that sort of support which the Literary Fund bestowed upon such men, "relieving them like paupers, and waiting till they become paupers before any relief is bestowed." One of his latest public appeals, in a like spirit, was to claim the only true help for the writer, which consists in obtaining for him his own, by juster legislative arrangements as to copyright; and on the very eve of the refusal of the baronetcy which Peel would have bestowed upon himself, he declared that the State had no such efficient servants as men of genius, and none who had higher or better title to all its honors and rewards.

Two more subjects connected with his last years, hardly known in connection with him, but which many personal associations make memorable to me, will further show how strongly and steadily the fire that lighted his youth had survived to sustain and inspire his age. The social reforms which have endeared to the working millions of England the name of Lord Shaftesbury, were the subject of his last, almost daily, correspondence with Lord Ashley during the days

of the agitation of political reform ; and the last great book published in his lifetime, wherein he recognized at once the presence of a new literary potentate, was Carlyle's *French Revolution*. Never had he read a history, he declared, which interested him so much ; and doubtless all the more because of the emotion which the tremendous course of events it describes had excited in him, when, in his own and Landor's youth, he read of them day by day. Not a few opinions, indeed, he found rising to the surface in that book to which he hardly knew what reception to give ; but with wisdom and with feeling he found it to be full to overflowing, nor could he rest satisfied till he had seen and spoken with the author.

Let me not close without a brief record of some yet unpublished correspondence of this delightful letter-writer : —

MRS. SOUTHEY TO LANDOR : 10TH APRIL, 1844.

"I have had occasion lately, with a view to set at rest some uncertainty about a date, to venture on a task hardly less trying than the opening of a sepulchre. With a desperate hand I opened the receptacle of his letters, — of our twenty years' correspondence ! wherein 'he being dead yet speaketh.' Once having plunged into it, there was no withdrawing ; but neither is it a thing to talk of. My sole motive for thus naming it is, that having hit upon one passage (among many others) that I thought could not fail to touch and please you, I selected and will transcribe it for you. The letter from which I transcribe bears date November 13, 1824.

"'Landor has sent over another volume of *Conversations* to the press. Differing as I do from him in constitutional temper and in some serious opinions, he is yet of all men living the one with whom I feel the most entire and cordial sympathy of heart and mind. Were I a single man, I should think the pleasure of a week's abode with him cheaply purchased by a journey to Florence, though pilgrim-like the whole way were to be performed on foot.'

"If you survive me, dear Mr. Landor, you will probably see the whole of this precious series, in which (I do not fear to say it) there will be more of deep and touching interest, for all but the learned and political reader, than in any other portions of his correspondence. His sensitive nature could never have poured out its feelings so freely to any but a woman, and that woman one whom he esteemed enough to make her the companion of those latter days which he humbly hoped would have been bright with sunset glory."

In the same letter there is mention of a bust executed for Doctor Southey by Mr. Lough, which had deeply affected her ; as it will, when seen, probably affect all to whom the living face was known. The soul is there ; and, of the three marble faces which I have myself examined, in Crossthwaite Church by the same artist, and by others in Westminster Abbey and in Bristol Cathedral, it seems to me incomparably the best. In Crossthwaite, Lough's full-length recumbent marble figure almost fills the little church it lies in ; but I was more interested by the modest grave in the churchyard facing Skid-daw and Saddleback, with the Glaramara range behind forming a glorious belt round the lake. A worthy resting-place, I thought, for



a great and good man. Nor less interesting to me was Wordsworth's grave at Grasmere, which I visited later in the day, overshadowed by yews, and with the Rothay gushing past. And so they lie, two men whom true Englishmen should never cease to honor, by Derwent Lake and Grasmere Springs,

Serene creators of immortal things,  
now themselves immortal.

## VII. LAST SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS, AND SOME LETTERS.

The entire number of new Conversations added to the old during the twenty-one years now under description, written before Landor's return to Italy, and excluding only the five which belong to the last six years of his life, were thirty-nine; and the additional subjects may here be named. Eighteen belonged to the domain of modern foreign politics, and of these I will give little more than the titles. They were Bugeaud and an Arab chieftain on the eve of the marshal's massacre in Algeria; — Talleyrand at his last confession to the Archbishop of Paris; — the Queen of Tahiti, the English consul Pritchard, Louis Philippe's envoy de Mitrailles, and the French officers and sailors who were present when the envoy struck the Queen in the face; — Louis XVIII. and Talleyrand conversing on the genius of Wellington, as to whom it is finely said that his loftiest lines of Torres Vedras, which no enemy dared assail throughout their whole extent, were his firmness, his moderation, and his probity; that these placed him more opposite to Napoleon than he stood in the field of Waterloo; that no man so little beloved was ever so well obeyed; and that there was not a man in England of either party, citizen or soldier, who would not rather die than see him disgraced; — Thiers talking to Lamartine of the foreign policy of the House of Orleans; — Louis Philippe expounding to Guizot the moral of the Spanish marriages; — Antonelli and Gemeau conversing twice on the Occupation of Rome; — President Louis Napoleon characterizing to M. de Molé the policy of his uncle; — King Carlo-Alberto discussing with the Duchess Belgioiso the prospects of Italy, and local jealousies in the way of unity; — Larochejaquelin receiving Béranger before the second Empire; — Garibaldi giving honor to Mazzini for the defence of Rome; — three dialogues of Nicholas and Nesselrode on the policy of the Crimean War; — the Archbishop of Florence sentencing for heresy the Bible-reading family of Francesco Madiari; — and two final dialogues on the contentions of religion, contributed by Antonelli and Pio Nono, and by brothers Martin and Jack of the family of the Dean of St. Patrick. "Both parties," says Martin, "call themselves *catholic*, which neither is; nor indeed, my dear Jack, is it desirable that either should be. Every sect is a moral check on its neighbor. Competition is as wholesome in religion as in commerce. We must bid high for heaven; we must surrender much, we must strive much, we must suffer much; we must make way for others, in

order that in our turn we may succeed. There is but One Guide. We know him by the gentleness of his voice, by the serenity of his countenance, by the wounded in spirit who are clinging to his knees, by the children whom he hath called to him, and by the disciples in whose poverty he hath shared."

Of subjects more strictly biographical there were four. The speakers were, Eldon and his grandson Encombe, played off against each other with exquisite fooling; Wellington and Inglis after the Somnauth proclamation of Lord Ellenborough, where it is shown how small was the fear of Juggernaut coming down St. James's Street; Romilly\* and Wilberforce talking of the Abolition of the Slave-trade; and Wyndham and Sheridan in discussion about the Irish Church, Sheridan maintaining that the only reform of her feasible was to abolish her bishops and endowments, sell the whole of her lands, and devote all the proceeds in a just proportion between Papal and Protestant communicants, to the religious and moral education of the people. With these may be named the imaginary talk of two others of the most illustrious of Englishmen: Blake on his quarter-deck passing judgment on his delinquent brother Humphrey; and Oliver Cromwell with his Ironsides at his uncle Sir Oliver's in Hinchinbrook. On the old knight's noteworthy career perhaps a word is worth adding at Landor's suggestion. It did not close until Sir Oliver had reached his ninety-third year, and it had by that time covered a space which included all the men of great genius, excepting Chaucer and Roger Bacon, whom England up to this date had produced: not the Bacons and Shakespeares only, but the prodigious shoal that attended these leviathans through the intellectual deep. Raleigh, Spenser, Marlowe, and all the dramatists of Elizabeth and James; Cromwell, Eliot, Milton, Selden, Hampden, and Pym; Hooker, Taylor, Barrow, and Newton; Hobbes, Sidney, Locke, and Shaftesbury; all had lived in some part or other of that single life.

The Italian subjects were four: Macchiavelli and Michael-Angelo on the suitability of Federal Republics for the government of Italy; Titian and Cornaro on the glories of Venetian art; Leonora, in her last confession to Father Panigarola, avowing her love for Tasso; Alfieri's experiences of English literature and manners, in a conversation with Metastasio of delightful wit and eloquence, which has elicited on a former page the admiration and sympathy of Carlyle; and Michael-Angelo and Vittoria Colonna on the poets and artists of elder and later Italy. Besides these, there were two brief prose poems on the affecting double marriage of Count Gleichen, and on the unrewarded services to humanity of the noble English soldier by whom infanticide in India was abolished: there were four, to be named below, in which

\* Again let me show Landor's love for Romilly. "He went into public life with temperate and healthy aspirations. Providence, having blessed him with domestic peace, withheld him from political animosities. He knew that the soundest fruits grow nearest the ground, and he waited for the higher to fall into his bosom, without an effort or a wish to seize on them. No man whosoever in our parliamentary history has united, in more perfect accordance and constancy, pure virtue and lofty wisdom."



Landor takes personal part, with Southey, Porson, and Julius Hare : and four Greek and Roman conversations completed the extraordinary catalogue. The speakers in these last were Menander and Epicurus, in two dialogues composed after the writer's eightieth year, and not unworthy of the exquisite Epicurus and Leontion to which they are the sequel ; Epicurus and Metrodorus on the writers and the gods of Greece ; and Asinius Pollio and Licinius Calvus on the heroes and histories of Rome. If to this list I were to add the subjects also of the dialogues written in verse by Landor, some already named and more to be named hereafter, it would bring up the number of his compositions exclusively of this class to no less than one hundred and ninety ; in their mere number wonderful, and in their variety as well as unity of treatment still more memorable.

Of the four to which Landor contributes notices of personal opinion I am now to speak ; and first of that in which Southey and Porson are interlocutors. Landor's faith in Wordsworth had again been rudely shaken by his unyielding attitude in the Southey family dispute, and he had probably never felt less kindly to the great poet than during the final illness of their common friend. Hence, therefore, taking him for the subject of a second dialogue between Porson and Southey which was to comprise what he thought of the later English poets, he is led to dwell less on the merits than on the defects of the author of the *Lyrical Ballads*. Even from Southey is drawn the admission of his friend's weakness for reciting his own poetry, which yet his friend himself might have forgiven for the exquisite truth of the description of it. "He delivers them with such a summer murmur of fostering modulation as would perfectly delight you." But he is not the more inclined to spare his critics. In this, as in the first Porson dialogue, the critics of poetry are sharply handled ; and as true in its application now, as it was then, is what is said of their fashion of dandling their favorite for the time, and never letting him off their knee, feeding him to bursting with their curds-and-whey, while any other "they warn off the premises, and will give him neither a crust nor a crumb, until they hear he has succeeded to a large estate in popularity, with plenty of dependants." Against all that is thus grudging and ungenerous, there is eloquent protest ; from which as earnestly, but whether as truly may be doubted, Southey puts in a claim of exemption for genius itself, which is at least in keeping with the speaker's character. "The curse of quarrelsomeness, of hand against every man, was inflicted on the children of the desert, not on those who pastured their flocks on the fertile banks of the Euphrates, or contemplated the heavens from the elevated ranges of Chaldæa." Alas that experience should ever seem adverse to this ! but it is only too certain that the large estate in popularity, long and wearily expected, does not therefore bring content to its inheritor ; and that poets of the highest rank will not be found readier to do justice to others because they have had to wait long for justice to themselves.

There is much besides very truly said in this dialogue as to English poets of the second class. Delightful praise is given to Cowper; Byron and Scott are well discriminated, the last with a hearty cordiality; and, where the greater masters are incidentally named, language not inferior to their own arises to do them homage. "A great poet represents a great portion of the human race. Nature delegated to Shakespeare the interests and direction of the whole. To Milton was given a smaller part, but with plenary power over it; and such fervor and majesty of eloquence was bestowed on him as on no other mortal in any age." At this point, by an easy suggestion of kindred topics, the talk is drawn off by Porson to Demosthenes in that natural way which is the charm of all the dialogues, and which relieves with the freedom of conversation their most elaborate passages. But when the greatness of the old Greek orator, as well as its limit, has been expressed after its kind, Southey has an illustration at hand to avouch the yet superior greatness of the English poet and Puritan. "Hercules killed robbers and ravishers with his knotted club; he cleansed also royal stables by turning whole rivers into them: Apollo, with no labor or effort, overcame the Python; brought round him, in the full accordance of harmony, all the Muses; and illuminated with his sole splendor the universal world." With one more passage I will quit this dialogue. It occurs where exaggerated and indiscriminating judgments of the classics are explained by the tendency of us all, more or less, to value things proportionally to the trouble they have given us in the acquisition; and it is shown that this remark has wider application.

"He who has accumulated by a laborious life more than a sufficiency for its wants and comforts, turns his attention to the matter gained, oftentimes without a speculation at the purposes to which he might apply it. The man who early in the day has overcome, by vigilance and restraint, the strong impulses of his blood toward intemperance, falls not into it after, but stands composed and complacent upon the cool clear eminence, and hears within himself, amid the calm he has created, the tuneful pæan of a godlike victory. Yet he loves the Virtue more because he fought for her than because she crowned him."

In the three other conversations wherein Landor, Southey, and Julius Hare were interlocutors, Milton continued to receive critical treatment of the most striking kind: all his works, and eminently his Latin poems, being laid under contribution for subjects and illustration, and readings frequently suggested that add unexpected beauties to even his noblest verse. An instance has been cited for admiration by De Quincey, at the line of the *Agonistes* which depicts Samson in his fall:—

"Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him  
*Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with slaves*";

where, by the comma which Landor would thrice repeat, Samson's agony is the more vividly presented to us, under blindness, inability



of further triumph over enemies, toil for bread, and association with slaves, in all the accumulated aggravation of its unendurable misery. "A rib of Shakespeare would have made a Milton," says Landor in conclusion; "the same portion of Milton, all poets born ever since."

The talk with Julius Hare reintroduces Wordsworth, from whom, often and often as Landor takes leave, he is but the more and more loath to depart; and happily only quits him at last with wise and reconciling words. He would have all respect, all reverence even, short of worship, paid him; speaks with delight of the series of enchanting idyls into which the *Excursion* would subdivide, with help of a judicious enclosure act; places Virgil and Theocritus below him for everlasting freshness of description; and admits that no man has ever had such mastery over Nature in her profoundest relations to humanity. This includes more than Landor meant to concede, but is neither less nor more than true. It puts Wordsworth, where I believe his just place to be, above every other poet of his century. No effect comparable in its kind to that which his writings made and bequeathed, no such fruits of spiritual insight applicable not to his own time only, but to coming times and changes with which he would himself have had small sympathy, have attended those of any poet within living memory. The influence of his genius on his immediate contemporaries has been surpassed by its authority over their successors, whose ways of thought, not in poetry alone, have been mainly fashioned by his, and who seem but the precursors of other generations who will confirm and extend his sway.

Other views of Landor's as to books and men, which find expression in letters written at this date to me, may properly be inserted here. Wordsworth and other kindred subjects will reappear; and the reader will not judge hardly in them, or in similar detached sayings that may be given hereafter, such small contradictions or inconsistencies as are incident to the freedom of friendly correspondence. The animating spirit is always the same, and there is no mistaking Landor's voice in any.

#### ON A PASSAGE IN COLERIDGE'S LAY SERMON.

"I agree with you that few men in our days have written more eloquently than Coleridge: but to say things well is not enough for wisdom. He recommends (and in a sermon too) 'the ancient feeling of rank and ancestry as a counterbalance to the commercial spirit now prevalent.' Can anything be imagined more contrary to the spirit of Christianity, which all *Sermons* ought to inculcate on the Gospel only; or indeed more absurd in itself? For, how extremely small a number can possibly be actuated by 'the ancient feeling of rank and ancestry'! At the decease of Mr. William Pitt, who ferreted out from among bales and brokerages, rather than from iron chests and curled-up inventories, whatever, tarnisht or untarnisht, had a metallic odor and was heavy in the hand, there existed not in the whole English peerage twenty-five families of knightly dignity at the accession of the Tudors. Would Coleridge wish these new people to put on 'ancient feelings,' and to confound in their persons the very different predicaments of rank and ancestry?"

## A RENEGADE.

"There is nothing in the man's life that should surprise us. Is it not only too usual that the career both of bar and Parliament should be opened by petulant Sedition and closed by decorous Fraud? Barristers have at first a tinge of the tricolor, but at last rise with plethoric dignity from incendiaries into judges, and scowl heavily on the culprits they have excited and led astray."

## VULGAR MISTAKES.

"Coarse manners are oftentimes an effectual veil to worthless characters. Nothing is more commonly mistaken for manliness than brutality. They are upright who are unswayed by the affections; the sordid are the worthy; chatter is kindness; lowmindedness is condescension. The French are admirers of cruel princes, the English of clownish. We all have our sympathies."

## A JUDGMENT OF THREE ORATORS.

"I have often heard them, Grattan as well as Pitt and Fox; and, though I might otherwise be angry with him, I preferred always the plain-spokenness of Fox, even when hammering repetition upon repetition, to the sounding inanities of Pitt and the gaudy barbarism of Grattan."

## NAPOLEON.

"I say that there is no example in history of a man who made so little of so much: there is no example of one who lost so many armies, alienated so many adherents, exasperated so many potentates, defrauded so many nations: there is no example of one who, capable of doing so extensive good, did preferably so extensive evil. He opened the floodgates he was employed to close; and through them heaved back again the stagnant waters, pestilential to all Europe, which had been excluded with so much labor."

## EDUCATION.

"Education does not control or greatly modify the character. It brings out what lies within: *vim promovet insitam*: and that is nearly all it does."

## HAZLITT.

"Hazlitt's books are delightful to read, pleasant always, often eloquent and affecting in the extreme. But I don't get much valuable criticism out of them. Coleridge was worth fifty of him in that respect. A point may be very sharp, and yet not go very deep; and the deficiency of penetrating may be the result of its fineness. A shoemaker whose shoes are always well polished and always neatly cut out, but rarely fit, is not of much use to us."

## CHARACTERISTIC.

"Faults very often drop from us by thinking about them. I was remarking to a friend one day the common negligence of writing 'I never should have thought to have seen you here,' when he smiled and showed me that I myself had done it in the *Examiner*. I thought I should have dropt at the shock!"

## A LOST THOUGHT (8TH NOVEMBER, 1843).

"It is hardly possible to recover a lost thought without breaking its



wings in catching it. I got up in the middle of last night to fix one on paper, and fixed a rheumatism instead. Night is not the time for pinning a butterfly on a blank leaf."

#### NOT TO BE READ AT ONCE.

"There are admirable poems which demand relays. You cannot lay down Chaucer or Shakespeare. Spenser falls out of your hands in the midst of his enchantments. The longest of Wordsworth's poems I can get through without a relay is *Michael*; and there is not much in the old poets that we call the classic (since Ovid) which is worth this."

#### FAULTLESS WRITERS.

"La Fontaine, Catullus, and Sophocles, are perhaps the writers who have fewest faults. Strange companions! But there are pages in Shakespeare and Milton worth all the works of all three."

#### TWO-WORD RHYMES.

"How is it possible that so serious a writer as Miss Barrett should not perceive that the *two-word* rhyme is only fit for ludicrous subjects:—

'These rhymes appear to me but very so-so,  
And fit but for our Lady del Toboso.'

But we are so much in the habit of seeing the common law of the land in poetry infringed and violated that nothing shocks us."

#### INVITATION TO BATH (1843).

"I have an antique ring, long prized in our family, which I want to put upon your finger. For this express purpose it has been newly set over the ancient gold, and here are the lines I have written for it. It is a *mask*:—

Forster! though you never wore  
Any kind of mask before,  
Yet, by holy friendship! take  
This, and wear it for my sake."

#### PROSE RUNNING INTO VERSE.

"While writing the Tancredi dialogue, I had the greatest difficulty to prevent my prose running away with me.\* Sundry verses indeed I could not keep down, nor could I afterwards break them into prose. Here is a specimen, not in the Conversation as it stands at present, which was written while I fancied I was writing prose:—

Can certain words pronounced by certain men  
Perform an incantation which shall hold  
Two hearts together to the end of time?  
If these were wanting, yet instead of these,  
There was my father's word, and there was God's."

\* See *ante*, pp. 160, 554, &c. I could multiply such instances from his correspondence, light as well as grave, if it were worth the while. Here is one of the lighter sort from an invitation to me to visit him in Bath in the April of his 81st year. "What weather! Some demon seems to shuffle months together! March came for April, April comes for March. Here are two verses for you, with a rhyme to boot: no thanks to me, for I never intended it. And now, when *will* you come?"

## PROPERTY OF AUTHORS IN THEIR WRITINGS.

"It seems to me that no property is so entirely and purely and religiously a man's own as what comes to him immediately from God, without intervention or participation. It is the eternal gift of an eternal being. No legislature has a right to confine its advantages, or to give them away to any person whatsoever, to the detriment of an author's heirs. To the rights of another

'His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono.'"

## THE ELEGY IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

"Gray's Elegy will be read as long as any work of Shakespeare, despite of its moping owl and the tin-kettle of an epitaph tied to its tail. It is the first poem that ever touched my heart, and it strikes it now just in the same place. Homer, Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, the four giants who lived before our last Deluge of poetry, have left the ivy growing on the churchyard wall."

## SOUTHEY'S SMALLER PIECES.

"How delightful is the humor that runs through his smaller pieces! I am quite astonished at the *Gridiron*. It is the only modern piece that reminds me heartily of Aristophanes, — that admirable poet whose choruses have levity at one end with gravity at the other, like Apollo's arrow and indeed every arrow that can hit the mark. Are any poems of our time more animated or fanciful than the smaller pieces of Southey?"

## POETRY IN GENERAL (1843).

"I have rather a dislike to all poetry except the very highest; nearly all of it appears to me impure and false: strong expressions on subjects that cannot support them: the maculæ on the smaller stars that were above the horizon in Shakespeare's time. There is so much too that is incongruous, and I require the unmixed. Salt and sugar ought to be kept separate. Coffee should not taste of cheese, nor tea of mustard. Wordsworth has none of this bad housewifery; nor has Southey, in whose mind there are at least more mansions than in father Wordsworth's. Tennyson has too many summer-houses and pavilions for the extent of his grounds; but everything in them is pleasing and suitable. And what fine poems are such as his *Ulysses* and his *Godiva*!"

## THE PRELUDE OF WORDSWORTH.

"You have indeed given me a noble passage from Wordsworth's Prelude: *O si sic omnia scripsisset!* Higher it would be difficult to go. Here the wagoner's frock shows the coat of mail under it. Here is heart and soul. Here is the *εἰκὼν βασιλική* of poetry."

## ASSAILANTS OF GENIUS.

"Such creatures as — may pelt young Keats as he climbs the tree; but that Gray should be insensible to the fervor of Rousseau is quite astonishing, quite deplorable. I wonder how people dare to lie in the presence of such a train of detectives, reaching from their own doors to the very limits of space and time."



## A SHAKESPEARE CELEBRATION (1844).

"A herd of clownish Warwickshire squires of the purest breed, and in no county of England is the breed so pure, was resolved to celebrate Shakespeare's birthday at Stratford-upon-Avon. I was invited: I declined. I told them he was not only the greatest glory of their county but the greatest work of God's creation, but I should hardly testify my love and veneration by eating and drinking, and I had refused all such invitations when I might meet those who knew me, of whom in Warwickshire there is now scarcely one. I could not help doubting whether any of the party ever read a single page of his writings; but I entertain no doubt whatever that if he were living and had come into the party, they would have butted him out. As the rocks that bound the sea are formed by the smallest and most inert insects, so celebrity seems to rise up from accretions equally vile and worthless. This idea has occurred to me many times before, and may perhaps be found in my writings; but never did it come forward with so luminous a stare as on the present occasion."

## BYRON AND WORDSWORTH (BATH, 1845).

"A lady here, a friend of yours, has been lecturing me on my hostility to Wordsworth. In the course of our conversation I said what I turned into verse half an hour ago, on reaching home. No writer, I will again interpose before transcribing them, has praised Wordsworth more copiously or more warmly than I have done; and I said not a syllable against him until he disparaged his friend and greatest champion, Southey. You should be the last to blame me for holding the heads of my friends to be inviolable. Whoever touches a hair of them I devote *diis inferis, sed rite*. Here are the lines:—

Byron's sharp bark and Wordsworth's long-drawn wheeze  
Issue alike from breasts that pant for ease.  
One caught the fever of the flowery marsh.  
The other's voice intemperate scorn made harsh.  
But each hath better parts: to One belong  
Staffs for the old and guide-posts for the young:  
The Other's store-room downcast eyes approve,  
Hung with bright feathers dropt from moulting Love."

## BARRY CORNWALL (1840).

"Give the admirable Procter one [a copy of his *Andrea and Giovanna*]. What delightful poetry he writes! How fresh and sweet and pleasant the old-world flavor which he gives to modern life! Nobody writes with more purity. As to my own, *jam satis terris niviis*. I think it cold languid stuff for the most part beside his. I have read XXI. and XLIV. of his *Songs* six or seven times; and how beautiful XIII., V., LXXXII., CVIII., — in fact all of them!"

## ROBERT BROWNING.

"You were right as to Browning. He has sent me some admirable things. I only wish he would atticize a little. Few of the Athenians had such a quarry on their property, but they constructed better roads for the conveyance of the material."

## AGAIN: SOMEWHAT LATER (1845).

"I have written to Browning; a great poet, a very great poet indeed, as the world will have to agree with us in thinking. I am now deep in the *Soul's*

*Tragedy.* The sudden close of *Luria* is very grand; but preceding it I fear there is rather too much of argumentation and reflection. It is continued too long after the Moor has taken the poison. I may be wrong; but if it is so, you will see it and tell him. God grant he may live to be much greater than he is, high as he stands above most of the living: *latis humeris et toto vertice*. But now to the *Soul's Tragedy*, and so adieu till we meet at this very table."

*Luria* had been dedicated to Landor, who in later years, as will be seen hereafter, was to receive from its writer a graver service; and though the fame is now Mr. Browning's by rightful inheritance which but a few claimed for him when this letter was written, a tribute may be still matter of just pride to him which connects, with a man so remarkable as Landor, a wish so earnestly uttered, and a prediction so well fulfilled.

#### VIII. A FRIEND NOT LITERARY, AND OTHER FRIENDS.

Every autumn, as long as the last of Landor's sisters lived, took him upon a visit to her in Warwick, at the house in which he was born; and the only drawback from his pleasure, on these as on all occasions when he quitted Bath, was his inability, through fear of accident or loss, to take with him a favorite companion, who may claim honorable mention in this history. "Daily," he wrote to me from Warwick in 1844, "do I think of Bath and Pomero. I fancy him lying on the narrow window-sill, and watching the good people go to church. He has not yet made up his mind between the Anglican and Roman Catholic; but I hope he will continue in the faith of his forefathers, if it will make him happier." This was a small white Pomeranian dog that had been sent to him from his Fiesolan villa the previous autumn; visiting by the way myself, to whom he had been consigned for safer delivery; and at first sight fairly dazzling me, as I well remember, by the eager brightness of his eye and the feathery whiteness of his coat, as he pushed his nose through the wicker basket in which he had travelled the last stage of his journey. "Eighteen shillings for me, padrone," was the message sent me in Landor's next letter, informing me that already they were on speaking terms, and that I was to be reimbursed his fare from Florence. "He places his head between my knees to hear that part of the letter which concerns him personally. He barks terribly, and listens to no expostulation; but replies that he is a young creature, and ought to have his own way in consideration of it; finally, that his grandpapa kept up barking till the advanced age of seven." For many more years than seven the new friends were inseparable; and Landor's own figure, as it trudged up and down Bath streets, was not better known than his little bright-eyed companion's became. They were faces, both of them, that most people turned to look after; and Pomero certainly had the better coat. His master was quite conscious of



this ; and not long after his arrival told me, on sending me his "love and a bite," that the young rascal, not content with the advantage he already had, was always trying to make it greater. "He will have to pay at least half my tailor's bill, besides the mending of my new silk stockings. However, I do assure you he is well born. I have been making inquiries about it. There is not an older family in Bologna. His ancestors preceded the Bentivoglios, and were always staunch republicans."

"Pomero was on my knee," he says on another occasion to me, "when your letter came. He is now looking out of the window ; a sad male gossip, as I often tell him. I dare not take him with me to London. He would most certainly be stolen, and I would rather lose Ipsley or Llanthony. The people of the house love him like a child, and declare he is as sensible as a Christian. He not only is as sensible, but much more Christian than some of those who have lately brought strife and contention into the Church. Everybody knows him, high and low, and he makes me quite a celebrity." As time went on, his value to his master went far beyond Ipsley or Llanthony ; for on a lady asking whether he was inclined to part with him, "No, madam," was his answer, "not for a million of money !" "*Not for a million !*" she exclaimed ; whereupon I added, "that a million would not make me at all happier, and that the loss of Pomero would make me miserable for life." Nor perhaps will the reader object to another mention of this little hero at the house of one of his master's earliest heroines and dearest friends, as I saw her myself in Bath, looking nearly as young as her grandchild. "Pomero is sitting in a state of contemplation, with his nose before the fire. He twinkles his ears and his feathery tail at your salutation. He now licks his lips and turns round, which means *Return mine*. The easterly wind has an evident effect on his nerves. Last evening I took him to hear Luisina de Sodre play and sing. She is my friend the Countess de Molandè's granddaughter, and daughter of De Sodre, minister of Brazil to the Pope a few years ago. Pomero was deeply affected, and lay close to the pedal on her gown, singing in a great variety of tones, not always in time. It is unfortunate that he always *will* take a part where there is music, for he sings even worse than I do."

As his companion in morning calls, Landor took his faithful little friend more frequently ; and one of the residents in Bath, a clever as well as kindly observer, has described one of his morning visits as an event to the friend he visited. I have myself been present at them, and can confirm the description. The favorite subject of conversation would be rather politics than literature ; and during all the time of the visit the little animal would be lying under his chair, with front paws stretched out, sharp face flattened on them, and small ears restlessly moving to catch any remotest signal that this wearisome morning call was over. The glad intimation would come quite unexpectedly, when, on hearing suddenly from Landor, in the very middle of some

frantic outburst of wrath or some heresy of wild extravagance, a word or two of caressing Italian, out from his chair would dart Pomero, rushing and leaping into his master's lap, and barking madly in the ecstasy of his joy. "I shall never survive thee, carissimo," Landor thereupon would say; to which, as the other barked a like glad promise, he would add, "I do not intend to live after him. If he dies, I shall take poison."\*

These touches will suffice, though hardly a letter now came from him that did not name the small fond creature: but I may add, that whenever his more intimate friends visited Bath in his absence, they were expected to see and report of Pomero "*en pension*"; and as the reception given to Kenyon on one of these occasions was pretty much that which all of us had, a few words from Landor shall describe it. "Kenyon tells me he saw Pomero at Bath, who turned his tail upon him; proud as a county candidate toward his constituents when he has just won his election. I shall reason with him on this, and tell him that *he* ought to know better, being somewhat more than country gentleman or a knight of a shire." The picture would hardly be complete without the contrast of how his master was received. "At six last night," wrote Landor to me the morning after one of his summer absences from Bath, "I arrived, and instantly visited Pomero *en pension*. His joy at seeing me amounted to madness. His bark was a scream of delight. He is now sitting on my head, superintending all I write, and telling me to give his love."

This kindly impression of my old friend will not be weakened by such brief notice as I can afford to give of his intercourse during these early Bath years with his oldest friend, his sister Elizabeth. There is a letter of his before me in which he describes the joy with which he had seen again the house that had been the principal home of his childhood, with its old mulberry-trees, its grand cedars, the chestnut wood with the church appearing through it, a cistus that she planted for him, and the fig-tree at the window on whose leaves soft rain was dropping as he wrote, and from which one little bird was chirping to tell another that there was shelter under them. "Turn away that branch, — gently, gently! do not break it, for the little bird sat there." Nothing was such pleasure to him always as to have the country in some form near, in shape of trees, plants, or flowers; and, through three successive changes of lodging during his first thirteen years in Bath, he clung to the square in which he first lived mainly because of a plane-tree and a mountain ash in the garden of which he was extremely fond. When an accident happened to one of his sister's cedars he grieved as he would have done for some friend of his youth. "You tell me," he wrote to her, "it is broken into splinters. Surely about the root there must be some

\* Mr. Spender, the author of the paper already referred to (p. 11), heard him say this, and adds: "Alas, it was Pomero who was poisoned by some malignant rascal." This is a mistake. The little fellow died of old age; having outlived the natural term for so small a creature very nearly as long as his master outlived his.



pieces large enough to make a little box of. Pray keep them for me. Here is a man at Bath who will contrive to form them into something which I may keep in my bedroom." His sister had anticipated the wish: a writing-case of cedar, already put in hand for him, reached him on his next birthday: and I was witness to the delight with which he received it. He was seventy that day, and had risen at his usual hour of nine, though he had stayed at the subscription ball the previous night till close upon the third hour of morning. I rallied him on his dissipation, and warned him, even though Medea's caldron might still be boiling in Bath, that to give such advantage to the enemy might bring him down some day into the very middle of the brew. "I don't invite him," was his laughing reply; "but I shall receive him hospitably when he comes."

In the same year (1845) he described to his sister his way of life. "I walk out in all weathers six miles a day at the least; and I generally, unless I am engaged in the evening, read from seven till twelve or one. I sleep twenty minutes after dinner, and nearly four hours at night, or rather in the morning. I rise at nine, breakfast at ten, and dine at five. All winter I have had some beautiful, sweet daphnes and hyacinths in my windows." Inquiring in another letter after her dahlias, which he fears the frogs will abolish, he tells her he never sees or hears the name without the recollection of a story told of a countryman of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, to whom a lady said, "Mr. Flanagan, I am quite certain you are an admirer of dahlias!" "Why then, faith, madam," was his reply, "they accuse me very wrongfully. I know enough about 'em; but sure, on my conscience, I have had mighty little to say to 'em. The experience of Mr. Flanagan, like that of Sir Lucius, had been limited to Delias, which the Irish "pronounce the same." In another of his letters, this 1845 being the year of his brother Robert's publication of the *Fawn of Sertorius*, which, while everybody praised, nearly all persisted in throwing into the elder brother's lap, he had to tell his sister that he had declared "to a dozen of them at least" that he neither wrote it nor was capable of writing it, nor had seen a single page of it before it was in print. "Some blockhead," he added, "says it is what a certain celebrated poet would have written if he wrote in prose. Now though a goose or a turkey may be the better for having the nerves and sinews drawn out of him, a poet without them is none the more palatable or digestible. Fifty such fellows are not worth the Fawn's foot, and contain less juice and gelatine."

But having here anticipated somewhat, I go back for a few notices of earlier days. In 1841 he describes to his sister a visit to the rectory at Birlingham, of all places seen by him since his return to England that which had pleased him most; and where he had found their brother Robert the owner of fine pictures, and of grounds laid out with consummate taste, "living like a prince-bishop." In the same year he tells her, as already he had told his brother, of the delight

and wonder with which he had read Robert's *Tragedies*,\* protesting that, "in this century or the last," there had been nothing like the *Ferryman*: and he tells her, too, of the singular grief and low spirits he was in at losing his greatest friend in Bath, with whom he usually spent some hours of every day, General William Napier, just appointed governor of Guernsey. In another letter he expresses the wish that there should be a celebration of Robert's having reached his grand climacteric and got well into the sixties, by invitation from her to all the brothers, himself and Charles, Henry and Robert, to spend one more Christmas day together. It could scarcely be so merry as several of the former ones had been, and perhaps the recollection of those might a little sadden them; but was not there something of sadness in all such days? Not at this latter part of life only, but at every other, he had himself been inclined most to melancholy on days of festival. "My birthday, as long as I can remember, was a day of strange and unaccountable emotion to me; and in all my pleasures there has been more of softness than of serenity." But, enjoyment may be just as keen for being shaded with a touch of sadness; and I had too frequent and large a part in the grave, glad pleasure of that day not to know that he was able to get out of it, even to the last of them enjoyed by us together, more mirth than melancholy. Acknowledging this letter, his sister gladly accepted its proposal, and in further hospitable greeting sent him (his favorite dish at her Warwick breakfasts) a dried salmon. "It has come," he replied, "in all its glory. At first I doubted whether it might not be an alligator, from the size of it; and I thought of opening my sash and calling a chairman to carry it to the Museum. But recollecting what you had promised me in a former letter, I stayed my steps."

In the next year (1842) he sets her upon searching the old Warwick house for papers of his boyhood, remembered still. "Anciently there were some bits of my Latin poetry and other such stuff in a chest of drawers which stood in my bedroom, now a dressing-room. Most of these were translations of Cowley into Latin verse, and correcting his extravagance. This is curious at so early an age, for I did it at about sixteen." In the same letter he speaks pleasantly of the marriage of his niece Teresita Stopford to Lord Charles Beaclerc; tells of an expected visit of his daughter and second son from Fiesole; and bids her inform his brother Henry that he beats him in flowers, having to boast in that October month of a tube-rose five feet high. "I have also a young kitten; but she mews eternally, and tells me in plain language that old people and young never do well together." The way for Pomeroy was prepared by this failure of the young kitten; in her place, after a very few months, the little hero was installed; and his sister heard as much of him in all the later years as I did. "Let me congratulate you," he wrote in the summer of 1844, "on the accident that deprives you of your carriage-horses.

\* *Ante*, p. 534.



Next to servants, horses are the greatest trouble in life. Dogs are blessings, true blessings. Pomero, who sends his love, is the comfort of my solitude and the delight of my life. He is quite a public character here in Bath. Everybody knows him and salutes him. He barks aloud at all — familiarly, not fiercely. He takes equal liberties with his fellow-creatures, if indeed dogs are more his fellow-creatures than I am. I think it was Saint Francis de Sales who called birds and quadrupeds his sisters and brothers. Few saints have been so good-tempered, and not many so wise." And in the same kindly spirit to all dumb creatures he speaks in another letter of field-sports. "Let men do these things if they will. Perhaps there is no harm in it ; perhaps it makes them no crueller than they would be otherwise. But it is hard to take away what we cannot give ; and life is a pleasant thing, at least to birds. No doubt the young ones say tender things one to another, and even the old ones do not dream of death."

The reader will understand why I thus desire Landor to be judged as well by his gentler sayings in private intercourse as by his louder utterances in public. They in some sort explain each other, and certainly will help to each other's better understanding. "You do not know Landor," said Sir William Napier to a friend offended by his intemperate assaults on King Bomba or some other favorite aversion. "In matters of that sort he is reckless in expression only. What is savage in his speech does not spring from anything savage in his nature. Those wild cries of his at seeing his fellow-creatures over-ridden by injustice or tyranny are but the sign of an honest human feeling and a deep compassion. He has the lion-heart that springs forward to tear the wrong-doer, and the chained lion's roar of fury when he finds that he cannot reach him. Yet, if he saw tyrannicide lifting the knife, I am well convinced he would rather himself receive the blow than let it fall on the man it was aimed at."

Upon such outbreaks, as generally upon his vehement contributions to matters of public controversy which distinguished both his early and later years in Bath, I do not care to dwell, though I was chiefly myself responsible for giving them to the world. The Napier apology is undoubtedly worth much ; but the evidence and the witness must be taken together, and the testimony is not without a flaw. Napier himself had a good deal in common with his friend, not alone of chivalrous spirit, disinterested aims, and a character incapable of meanness, but also of an arrogance of temper obscuring somewhat the splendor even of his achievements, a resentful impatience of difference of opinion, and a proneness to express with violence views recklessly formed. But having said this, there is nothing more to be said. A never-ceasing and quite unwearying hatred of oppression animated both ; and whatever else was to be remarked of Landor's comments on passing events, the charge was not at any time to be made against him of siding with the strong against the weak, or of

passing over the neglected and unregarded. Somebody at this time compared his weekly onslaughts on what he took to be scandals in church or state, to the growls of an ancient cynic worried by the sight of purple and fine linen; describing him as tame and civil before a beggar, nay, as even fawning on the tatters of adversity: and when that is nearly the worst that can be urged, it is hardly worth while to make an unpardonable sin of an ungovernable temper. I will only add, before quitting this subject, that he wrote frequently on the condition of Ireland, and for the most part with a gravity and impartiality into which faults of temper entered rarely. He remonstrated with O'Connell, when at the height of his repeal agitation, for wasting upon a design both foolish and impracticable powers that might have forced upon attention the true and attainable remedies; \* and to Mr. Thomas Davis, the creator and leader of the party which subsequently broke down O'Connell's influence, he addressed truths not less unpalatable. Davis had, in my judgment, qualities that would have made him incomparably the ablest politician produced by Ireland in our day; and his premature death, before what was crude and immature in his opinions had time to ripen, was a great calamity. A letter from him, found among Landor's papers, will be read with interest by very many who cherish his memory. The allusions to Father Matthew were elicited by Landor's excessive admiration for him. I am not sure that he did not think this reverend father to be the only true successor of the apostles living in our age.

"61 Baggot Street, 17th December, 1840.

"SIR, — I have just received your kind note. When I sent you my pamphlet I wished (as I had an opportunity even in a trifle) to express my respect for one whose books I loved. I did not expect a reply, but as you were good-natured enough to send one, the least I can do is to thank you for it. We are glad of any intercourse with the parents of our friends, and

\* The beginning of O'Connell's reply, written from Derrynane, may still be read with a smile.

"You wrong me much in supposing that I do not know you. 'Not to know *you* were to bespeak myself unknown.' Little do you imagine how many persons besides myself have been delighted with the poetic imaginings which inspired these lines on one of the wonders of my infancy, the varying sounds emitted by marine shells, —

'And they remember their august abodes,  
And murmur as the ocean murmurs there.'

Would that I had you here, to show you 'their august abode' in its most awful beauty! I could show you at noontide, when the stern southwester had blown long and rudely, the mountain waves coming in from the illimitable ocean in majestic succession, expending their gigantic force, and throwing up stupendous masses of foam against the more gigantic and more stupendous mountain-cliffs that fence not only this my native spot, but form that eternal barrier which prevents the wild Atlantic from submerging the cultivated plains and high-steeped villages of proud Britain herself. Or, were you with me amidst the Alpine scenery that surrounds my humble abode, listening to the eternal roar of the mountain torrent as it bounds through the rocky defiles of my native glens, I would venture to tell you how I was born within the sound of the everlasting wave, and how my dreamy boyhood dwelt upon Imaginary Intercourse with those who are dead of yore, and fed its fond fancies upon the ancient and long-faded glories of that land which preserved literature and Christianity when the rest of now civilized Europe was shrouded in the darkness of godless ignorance."



your books were friends of mine and of those whom I most regard. I am glad to find you have hopes for Ireland. You have always had a good word and I am sure good wishes for her. If you knew Mr. Matthew, you would relish his simple and downright manners. He is joyous, friendly, and quite unassuming. To have taken away a degrading and impoverishing vice from the hearts and habits of three millions of people in a couple of years seems to justify any praise to Mr. Matthew, and also to justify much hope for this people. And suffer me to say that if you knew the difficulties under which the Irish struggle, and the danger from England and from the Irish oligarchy, you would not regret the power of the political leaders, or rather leader, here; you would forgive the exciting speeches, and perchance sympathize with the exertions of men who think that a domestic government can alone unite and animate all our people. Surely the *desire* of nationality is not ungenerous, nor is it strange in the Irish (looking to their history), nor, considering the population of Ireland and the nature and situation of their home, is the expectation of it very wild. I have taken the liberty of saying this because of the last sentence in your note. And now, praying your pardon for this intrusion on your time, for I know you will forgive the freedom of what I have said,

"I remain, sir, your most obedient servant,

"THOMAS DAVIS.

"Walter S. Landor, Esq., Bath."

#### IX. REVIEWS, COLLECTED WORKS, POEMATATA ET INSCRIPTIONES, AND HELLENICS.

In August, 1842, Robert Landor wrote to his brother that he had been reading with unusual satisfaction two reviews lately written by him, on Catullus and on Theocritus; and that besides the pleasure he had derived from the completeness and refinement of the criticism, they had given him a pleasure of another kind which he could hardly specify without implying something a little disrespectful. "They are as remarkable for their candor and moderation as for other qualities of which I felt more certain; and, in speaking of our own poets now living, there is the same freedom from prejudice as in your observations on those who have been dead these two thousand years. Nor can I believe that there is an idyl of Theocritus more tender or graceful, or even more classical, than that of the Hamadryad. The conclusion appears to me more like the sweetest parts of *Gebir* than anything you have written, and much more delicate in its pathos than any other person has written, since."

These essays, as well as a later one on Petrarch, were written at my request for a review which I then conducted, and they well deserve what is thus said of them. For two others, on Pindar and on Horace, he also at the time collected the materials, and it was to me a special regret that the latter was not written. For I had ventured to think the tone of his reply to the review of the *Pentameron*, printed on a former page, not wholly just to either Virgil or Horace; and upon both, but especially the last delightful writer, he threw out indications in the first of his essays that my suggestion had been con-

sidered. "One poet is not to be raised by casting another under him. Catullus is made no richer by an attempt to transfer to him what belongs to Horace, nor Horace by what belongs to Catullus. Catullus has greatly more than he; but he also has much, and let him keep it." No injustice more gross is committed in criticism than when one writer is thus pitted against another. The genius of Catullus you may think supreme, but that Horace is more of a favorite with greater numbers of people is a fact as little to be doubted. A critic, if unable otherwise to account for the fact, should consider this power to engage and delight many minds as no small merit in itself; if nothing else, as at least a proof that the master of it is in sympathy with the world. Some writers have a charm beyond the reach of criticism; sometimes perhaps opposed to its conclusions, and certainly often wanted by others of superior excellence. There are a hundred readers of Virgil and Horace to one of Catullus.

From letters written to me during the composition of the essays, some characteristic traits may be drawn. Catullus was the first subject chosen; and the necessary rendering of portions into English he found to be extremely difficult, glibly as the work has since been done by more hands than one.

#### ATTEMPTS TO TRANSLATE CATULLUS.

"I have attempted in vain to translate the extracts from Catullus. My version of the Description of Morning, of which the original verses, as mere verses, are the finest to be found anywhere out of Milton, is infamously bad. Pray correct mine thus, where the waves awakened by the zephyr are said to move

Slowly and placidly, with gentle plash  
Against each other, and light laugh; but soon,  
The breezes freshening, rough and huge they swell,  
Afar refulgent in the crimson east.

But no man has ever been able to translate this writer, and no man ever will be. The lighter things are easy, and so are some of the graver; for Langhorne, I think, has given an admirable version of 'Miser, Catulle.' But though my Latin hendecasyllabic is better than the greater part of his, I could not in a lifetime write 'Quoi quam sit,' &c., nor could Robert Smith himself. Dryden, who makes Virgil, Lucretius, and Horace always more vigorous than they were, though he misses the softness and pathos, could never give the delicacy of 'Ac me,' nor 'Quoi,' &c., with its easy simple force. The three verses, again, 'Quæ tibi,' are three pearls, worth more than all the Billingsgate oysters and all their shells that were ever thrown into the Thames. Who ever wrote such a good thing of a fool as 'Ipse qui sit, utrum sit,' &c. Is it worth giving this version of the Odi et Amo?

I love and hate. Ah, never ask why so!  
I hate and love; and that is all I know.  
I see 't is folly, but I feel 't is woe."

Pindar he meant next to have tried, but to his surprise he found the language, after some years' abstinence, so unfamiliar as to render the undertaking too much of a task. He would always say he was



never more than a boy in Greek, though he grew up to adolescence in Latin, and bore a strong beard in English. But even while he was complaining that he must learn the language over again, it came gradually back to him; and I remember well, when we next met, his likening that resumption of the reading of Greek to the sensation of entering a cathedral, where at first you find it dark, until use leads you on, and at last you become conscious of all the grand magnificence to which your eye dilates. After one day's reading he discarded his lexicon, and though he did not go on with Pindar he took up with another Greek favorite.

## AS TO PINDAR.

"The edition you have sent me I find to be edited with admirable learning. Who indeed can add anything to what such men as Heyne and Hermann have written? I happened to open your volume at p. 37. *Ἰων ξανθαῖσι καὶ πανπορφύροις ἀκτῖσι* seems rather the pansy than the gillyflower, which is nowhere *πανπόρφυρον*. The Greeks and modern Italians called several very different flowers by the names of *Ἰων* and *viola*. In Tuscany the violet is called for distinction's sake *viola mammola*."

The result was the paper on Theocritus, as delightful a piece of writing as any that ever fell from him; and the day after the manuscript reached me I had this letter:—

"At the account of the first idyl where the herd offers Thyrsis his most magnificent goat for a song, insert this:—

"We often hear that such or such a thing is not worth an old song. Alas, how few things are! What precious recollections do some of them awaken! what pleasurable tears do they excite! Not only do they purify the stream of life, but they can delay it on its shelves and rapids, they can turn it back again to the soft moss amidst which its sources issue."

I have been trying a version of the famous lines in that idyl, so weakly imitated by Virgil, so beautifully by Milton, which yet does not please me. Fine as are the verses of Theocritus, the Greek language itself cannot bear him above Milton in his *Lycidas*.

Where were ye, O ye nymphs, when Daphnis died?  
For not on Pindus were ye, nor beside  
Penëus in his softer glades, nor where  
Acis might well expect you, once your care.  
But neither Acis did your steps detain,  
Nor strong Anapus rushing forth amain,  
Nor high-browed Ætna with her forest chain.

I shall also add what I think is somewhat of an idyl; but you will judge. I took the idea from a note in your Pindar. I had forgotten the story."

The story was the Hamadryad; and at no period of his life had he written a short poem in feeling belonging more intensely to the antique world, in the spirit of it more youthful, or of a more enchanting grace and delicacy of expression, than this in his seventieth year. Its subject is a wood-nymph's love for a young forester who has foreborne to fell the oak that is her home: and what a poet who was less of a Greek would have turned into sentiment or allegory, is made to

interest us here by an absolute simplicity and reality. The time of light, clear, definite sensation ; when, to every man, the shapes of nature were but the reflection of his own ; when marvels were not explained but believed, and the supernatural was not higher than the natural, or indeed other than a different development of the attributes and powers of nature ; is reflected in every line. Not human, yet not above humanity, the fairy doubts if her lover will be constant ; perplexed between her natural heart and her shadowy non-natural ways, the mortal has his doubts as well ; and, in the way we thus become conscious alike of the pains and pleasures, the enjoyments and the misgivings, of such unequal intercourse, there is a wonderful fascination. A bee is always sent to him when she specially desires his presence : in long summer days, and longer winter nights, still sent forth by her,

“ To bring that light which never wintry blast  
Blows out, nor rain nor snow extinguishes,  
The light that shines from loving eyes upon  
Eyes that love back till they can see no more ”:

and he has engaged himself never to own that he has tired of her, if ever such a calamity should befall. He is only to drive the bee away. “ Then shall I know my fate, and, for thou must be wretched, weep at thine.” Nor does he really in any heartless fashion tire or cease to be fond of her. But he is a mortal, not a dryad ; and, mortal habits resuming their control, it happens one day that, annoyed by a little insect too importunately buzzing in his ear at an inconvenient time, he lifts his hand impatiently, and in the same moment breaks the wing of a bee and the heart of the hamadryad. Landor liked his idyl so much that it may be worth adding a characteristic correction of it sent me not long before his death, in which he removed a bit of sentiment, a reflection, from it.

“ Whenever you revise my poems do not forget to strike out two verses from my *Hamadryad*, which ought to have been omitted by me. The verses I mean are in the dialogue where first she prays of Rhaicos to spare her oak, complains of him and his father slaying the innocent trees, and to his inquiry whether her flock is anywhere near, replies :—

I have no flock ; I kill  
Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,  
The sun, the dew. Why should the beautiful  
(And thou art beautiful) disturb the source  
Whence springs all beauty ? Hast thou never heard  
Of hamadryads ?

Now these are obscure ; I had corrected them to

Whence springs all beauty . . . Life. Has thou not heard, &c.

But I afterwards thought that the hamadryad should have cut across *this* little piece of reflection, and should have said :—

I have no flock ; I kill  
Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,  
The sun, the dew. Thou never, then, hast heard  
Of hamadryad.”



The third of these criticisms, all of them written with more care than he ordinarily bestowed on matters of the kind, had for its subject *Petrarca*; and it is curious that precisely the remark made by his brother Robert of the *Catullus* was made to him of this by Carlyle. "That piece on *Petrarca*," he said, "surprises me (I beg many pardons) by its *impartiality* to that wearisome creature; and looks, in my mind, like a perfect steel engraving in the way of portraiture." The biographical portion is indeed a little masterpiece; and I cannot refrain from showing, by a few brief touches, how delicate are the strokes of the narrative. Of the proneness of tender hearts to be moulded by localities, he says, that perhaps the purity and singleness of *Petrarca's*, his communion with it on one only altar, his exclusion of all images but one, may have resulted from his long visit in boyhood to the gushing springs, the eddying torrents, the insurmountable rocks, the profound and inviolate solitudes of *Vaucluse*. Of *Laura's* coldness, he remarks that it is well perhaps for those who delight in poetry that she should have been inflexible and obdurate, "for the sweetest song ceases when the feathers have lined the nest." The danger of all "magical powers" to the possessor of them he illustrates by a fatal attribute in the "magic of the poet," that while he can always at will call before him the object of his wishes, her countenance and her words remain beyond his influence. Not sparing in his quiet illustrations of *Petrarca's* vanity, he yet repels the conceit ascribed to him in playing so often on the name of *Laura*: holding it to be a pardonable pleasure to cherish the very sound of what we love, for that, belonging as it does to the heart, it belongs to poetry, and is not to be cast aside. Of the poet's coronation it is remarked that no man can be made greater than another, although he may be made more conspicuous by title, dress, position, and acclamation; for the powerful can be but ushers to the truly great, "and only in the execution of this office they themselves approach to greatness." *Petrarca's* constancy while his mistress advanced in years is expressed by the saying that Youth has swifter wings than Love. "He had loved her sixteen years; but all the beauty that had left her features had settled on his heart; immovable, unchangeable, eternal." It is nevertheless as truly said, that when his love administered nothing to his celebrity it was silent; that there is a singular absence from his verses of all sympathy with *Laura's* personal griefs; that he thought more about her eyes than about those tears which are the inheritance of the brightest; and that he might well be supposed to have said, in some unedited canzone, "What care I what tears there be, If the tears are not for me?" The conclusion altogether is that *Petrarch* was the very best man that ever was a very vain one, while in him vanity had a better excuse for itself than in any other, since none was ever more admired by the world; and that, though *Laura* was sensible of little or no passion for him, she was pleased with his, and stood like a beautiful caryatid of stainless marble at the base of an image on

which the eyes of Italy were fixed. "He who has loved truly, and above all, he who has loved unhappily, approaches, as holiest altars are approached, the cenotaph on the little column at Arqua."

The letter accompanying this essay, when sent to me, told me of the progress of another and more important literary labor also undertaken at my suggestion, and to which I gave such help as he invited from me during the next following years. This was the Collection and Revision of all his Writings; a part of the design of which was that it should be completed with the completion of his seventieth year. But, by the labor involved in the preparation of it, a delay of more than six months after he had seen his seventy-first having intervened, he laughingly declared that this had freed him from a certain other resolution he would else have kept. "I have youth on my side," he wrote to Lady Blessington in November, 1844:—

"I shall not see seventy for nearly three months to come. Once beyond seventy I will never write a line in verse or prose for publication. I will be my own Gil Blas. The wisest of us are unconscious when our faculties begin to decay. Knowing this, I fixed my determination many years ago. Meanwhile I am acting religiously on F.'s advice. I pluck out my weeds all over the field, and leave only the strongest shoots of the best plants standing."

To me he wrote in another letter a few weeks later:—

"I am working very hard at the Collection, and will be mindful of your warnings. Old men are apt to stumble and fall flat when they totter into poetry. We all are archbishops at a certain age; but some can bear Gil Blas better than the others can. Yet I hope you will not have to repent of your wish to draw the world's attention to my grave. People will not read my writings until then, and then, if they like to do so, they may perhaps find, both in prose and poetry, what may enlarge their minds and correct their taste; and here I speak of those whose minds are already the largest, and whose taste is the most correct. There are some seeds that will germinate in gravel; but there are none of that species in my sack. I will scatter none on the roadside. Throw me open the garden, and I will try to do something for the well-ordered and clean *parterre*. Allow me one French word; you shall never have another from me: *border* would not do, nor *bed*. Cicero and Atticus blow a few Greek bubbles across to one another . . . not that I am to be swayed by the authority of either; but when I acknowledge a fault I hope for pardon. I began with self, and will end with self, as most men do. The literary world is a dram-drinking world at present; but it is quite possible that the next generation will relish a cooler and better flavored drink. My Conversations, whatever their demerits, will exhibit more qualities and postures of the human mind than any other book published in my day. Above two hundred men and women will live again; and, among the rest, neither Cicero nor Solon will be proved to have spoken more eloquently or more wisely in his former state. *Nec meus hic sermo est*. But of my poetry what shall I say? In fact I care little about it, though I have always been nursing it assiduously. I go on correcting and correcting, adding and adding, all my life through, and nobody (as might be expected) is less satisfied at last. Will this answer do for our friend, and is it worth retaining?



Yes: I write verses now and then,  
But blunt and flaccid is my pen,  
No longer talkt of by young men  
As rather clever.

In the last quarter are my eyes,  
You see it by their form and size;  
Is it not time then to be wise?  
Or now or never.

Fairest that ever sprang from Eve!  
While Time allows the short reprieve,  
Just look at me! would you believe  
'T was once a lover?

I cannot clear the five-bar gate;  
But, trying first its timber's state,  
Climb stiffly up, take breath, and wait  
To trundle over.

Through gallopade I cannot swing  
The entangling blooms of Beauty's spring:  
I cannot say the tender thing,  
Be't true or false;

And am beginning to opine  
Those girls are only half divine  
Whose waists yon wicked boys intwine  
In giddy waltz.

I fear that arm above that shoulder;  
I wish them wiser, graver, older,  
Sedater, and no harm if colder  
And panting less.

Ah! people were not half so wild  
In former days, when, starchly mild,  
Upon her high-heeled Essex smiled  
The brave Queen Bess."

Hardly any letter now reached me from him without a verse in it of some kind, grave or gay, to add to our Collection; thrown off with as much ease as if it were but ordinary speech, and seeming to prove beyond question that if he had only given to his poetry the same kind and amount of care bestowed upon his prose, he might in both have had few superiors. Among the verses that thus came to me, struck out amid the wearisome correction of proofs, were some that rank with his best in their kind. The Cymodameia, a charming Greek legend of two lovers who obtain by their fidelity the favor of Apollo, is one of them; and several smaller pieces that owed their inspiration to the before-named lady of the Aylmer family, who, both by her accomplishments and by her name of Rose, had brought back to him a dream of his youth, expressed delightfully his gratitude for the happiness her society had given him. From a letter to this lady dated a few weeks subsequent to the publication of the Collected Works, in which he had written of a harvest-scene witnessed with Kenyon (or rather with "all that is left of Kenyon, — scarcely three quintals: a mule now could carry him up hill"), I take a few words which express much. "Between the hay-harvest and the corn-harvest there is a lull of nature, a calm and somewhat dull quiescence. Autumn then comes to tell us of the world's varieties and changes. At last the white pall of nature closes round us. In the last seven or eight years I seem to myself to have passed through all the seasons of life excepting the very earliest and the very latest. I doubt whether I have ever been so happy in any other equal and continued space of time. Italy would sometimes flash back upon me; but lightnings only kept the memory awake, without disturbing it. How much, how nearly all, of this contentment do I owe to your friendship, to your music and your conversation!" (To Lady Sawle, 6th July, 1846.) To the same friend were addressed the lines "To a Bride," which stand last but one in the collection; with the date of the day, "17th February, 1846," on which she had changed her name.

Something also of a biographical interest may be found hereafter

in other personal poems clustering thick at the close of the book, which were mostly written while it passed through the printer's hands. Among these were the lines to his daughter Julia, to his niece Teresita Stopford, to Charles Dickens, to Robert Browning, to John Kenyon, and to Julius Hare; the latter name and my own standing together on the dedicatory page of the first volume, and on the final page of the second a poem to myself concluding the work, which reached me so late that the final sheet had to be cancelled to admit of its insertion. I hope to be forgiven for preserving it here, with the letter in which it came. Some allusions in it are to be explained by the fact that, as the person to whom he addressed it, and who had, by way of a good-humored Landorian imitation, just sent him some congratulatory verses on the completion of their joint labor in editing, was in those days an Edinburgh Reviewer, the writer not unreasonably expected for his now gathered and completed works a little praise from that cold quarter to set against less genial talk in former years.

"As the volumes begin they must end with you. *A te principium, tibi desinet.* These verses must be added; and here are two or three words to enrich the index: red-polled, siller-grasping (siller, Scotch for silver). Now, these I think must be my very last; for would it not be a scandal, my dear Forster, that a man in his seventy-second year should be running with his tongue out after the Muses?

FORSTER! whose zeal hath seized each written page  
That fell from me, and over many lands  
Hath cleared for me a broad and solid way,  
Whence one more age, ay, haply more than one,  
May be arrived at (all through thee), accept  
No false or faint or perishable thanks.  
From better men, and greater, friendship turned  
Thy willing steps to me. From ELIOT's cell  
Death-dark: from HAMPDEN's sadder battle-field;  
From steadfast CROMWELL's tribunitian throne,  
Loftier than king's supported knees could mount;  
Hast thou departed with me, and hast climbed  
Cecropian heights, and ploughed Ægean waves.  
Therefore it never grieved me when I saw  
That she who guards those regions and those seas  
Hath lookt with eyes more gracious upon thee.  
There are no few like that conspirator  
Who, under prétext of power-worship, fell  
At CÆSAR's feet, only to hold him down  
While others stabbed him with repeated blows:  
And there are more who fling light jibes, immerst  
In gutter-filth, against the car that mounts  
Weighty with triumph up the Sacred Way.  
Protect in every place my stranger guests,  
Born in the lucid land of free pure song,  
Now first appearing on repulsive shores,  
Bleak, and where safely none but natives move,  
Red-polled, red-handed, siller-grasping men.  
Ah! lead them far away, for they are used  
To genial climes and gentle speech; but most  
CYMODAMEIA: warn the Tritons off  
While she ascends, while through the opening plain  
Of the green sea (brightened by bearing it)  
Gushes redundantly her golden hair.



The lines, I think, will conclude the book becomingly and ornamentally, and help us hand in hand down to future generations. The men of our commonwealth indeed will never permit us to be separated, if only you remain faithful to their fields and pastures. But take care, take care you do not make me as jealous of you in poetry as I have often been in prose. Do not let me catch you again among

Those trackless forest glades, those noble hills,  
And those enchanting but sequestered valleys  
Which broad-browed Landor rules as his domain.

And now come and make your peace for having invaded that country."

Other invasions into his territory there also were, incident to the help I gave in preparation of the volumes, out of which arose conflicts that ended sometimes doubtfully, but always peacefully. Against his intended reformation of spelling I waged a successful war. If the language was ever in that respect to be amended, it seemed to me that it must be done by a great work designed for no other purpose, and that what Johnson had seen to be impracticable was not likely now to succeed. Books had multiplied too much; the literature had become too extensive for change; even Shakespeare and his successors had submitted to the strength of custom; and any attempt to resist such determination of the language could only avail to distract the reader's attention and vex him in vain. Right or wrong, habit was too strong for us, and there was nothing left us but to abide by that which was least likely to vary more. To this argument he yielded at last, reserving only a few words defensible on Milton's authority. But upon another point I was not so fortunate. I would fain have omitted nearly all the political dialogues, and shortened some of the others; sufficient for another man's reputation, it might be, but adding nothing to his; for I would have had no alloy, even of silver, where there was so much pure gold. Here however he was not to be moved. If I dismiss my Ferdinands and Don John Marys, he would say, the book ceases to represent all the parts of life which I proposed to exhibit in it. "You say that where conversations begin with heroes and continue with men, it is a violation of the rules of art that they should terminate with something lower. But that is exactly what I intended." He had also another argument.

"The volumes belong to you and Hare, without whom they could never have appeared, and I shall omit all the old dedications, — for Mina gave orders to kill a woman; Bolivar was a coxcomb and impostor, having been two hundred miles distant from the battle he pretended to have won; and Wilson is worse than a Whig. But you failed to convince me (and who, then, shall succeed in persuading me?) that I ought to cancel a single one of the Conversations. Lord Dudley told Hare that out of ninety there were not nine which any other man in England could have written. And he spoke the truth. There is a particle of salt in the very poorest of them which will preserve it from decomposition. Beside, this is to be considered, which nobody has considered sufficiently. If Shakespeare had written but *Othello*, the noblest of human works, he would scarcely have been half so great as the having written many dramas in addition, even inferior ones, has

made him. Genius shows its power by its multiformity. After the great poet had written half his plays, the writing of the other half would make him not merely one half greater, but three hundred-fold. This is because he has brought into activity so many powers of mind, and because there are so many systems all shining in their greater or their lesser spheres, throughout his vast creation."

Of the book thus given to the world it will not need that I should add anything to what already has been said of the several parts composing it. Its reception by the public was very favorable, and it had private greetings of unusual warmth. It was hailed as a double gift, to the age and to after ages, by some whose good word Landor reckoned to be fame; and perhaps he would himself have singled out, as the most welcome to him of all, the praise of William Napier. He wrote more than once, as he made his way through the volumes, in language of unfeigned astonishment. "You have two or three crotchets which you know I laugh at, though I never dispute with you on them; and which I believe you laugh at yourself in your sleeve, though it is a large sleeve that would hold your laugh. However, there they are, and they belong to you, in the same manner that Cromwell's wart belonged to him, and he would be a fine fool that judged Oliver's genius by his wart! I do declare, notwithstanding your Napoleon wart, that your work is marvellous." Again he wrote: "When I consider that the whole of these volumes is original, the pure production of your inventive brain, it is astounding. The variety and purity of your language, the vigor and wit of your thoughts, the extent of the ground you travel over, are all causes of amazement." A third letter, in which he wrote of the *Conversations* more exclusively, was very characteristic of himself as well as of Landor. "I know not what the temper of the different people, made eloquent by you, may have been, and therefore I know not if they would have listened to you; but they must all have had, in a greater or less degree, genius, and wit in the high significance of that word, and therefore I suppose would have bestowed an hour or two on you; and if so, you have shown that you could have talked well and wittily to the greatest men and women of every nation and of every age, since history took the place of fable, and perhaps better when fable *was* history. To the women you certainly could, you cunning knave, for you have adorned them with all the graces that poetry, the best and finest of fables, could invent. And yet you have borrowed nothing from former poets; unless it be the Olympus-shaking laugh of Homer's Jupiter, and that you keep for yourself. I would you could throw his lightnings also! I know where they would fall, and the world would soon be purged of all knaves and sneaking scoundrels."

The great soldier had perfectly understood what it was that formed the greatness as well as the charm of this collected series of writings. It was the range and the variety of its power; of which Julius Hare hardly spoke in excess, when, at this time also, he wrote of the book to its author, that it seemed to him to "contain more and more



various beauty than any collection of the writings of any English author since Shakespeare." Again the widow of Shelley, to whom he sent the volumes, took occasion to tell him how endeared to her by old associations all his early poetry had been ; to relate that her husband's passionate love for *Gebir* had outlived his young college days, remaining with him to the last ; and to add for herself that she had thus been led, since his death, to Landor's later works, in which she had ever found "the noblest sentiments, the most profound remarks, and the most exquisite imagery, expressed in words that ought to be studied for the welfare and cultivation of our language." One more opinion only I will quote, from a man of rare genius still living, out of those that Landor sent me on receiving them. "Nothing has been published that I can remember in which the display is so altogether extraordinary, of the rarest intellectual powers, I do believe, that were ever brought together in one man." It is certain that no book had been published containing both poetry and prose, by the same writer, of such equal and extraordinary merit.

There was nevertheless one thing wanting in it that left Landor thoroughly dissatisfied till the defect was otherwise supplied. His Latin poetry and prose, in his own esteem not inferior to his English compositions, were not there. He had yielded to my reasons for not including them. Right or wrong he could not deny that there had long ceased to be, with rarest exceptions, readers for Latin poetry as poetry and not as Latin merely ; our college systems having at least done this for us. Not for years only, but generations ; Latin poems had been read for literally nothing but their Latinity, just as pictures are often bought for their frames ; the painting and the poetry alike going for nothing. What number of readers, then, could he hope to interest, who had made his Latinity but the vehicle for his poetry, and finished his picture as of greater worth than its frame ? I might have resisted even the publication, in a separate small volume, of the *Poemata et Inscriptiones, novis auxit Savagius Landor*, which followed the Collected Works in the succeeding year, could I have foreseen all the troubles that attended the proper correction of its proofs. For, an acquaintance with the niceties of the language, which he should have valued least, was exactly that on which my old friend prided himself most ; and I should have said to any one who wished to torment him, Don't question his morals or steal his money, but make him answerable for false quantities or other bad Latin. He raged against the poor printers for such innocent lapses as *Angelina* for *Aufedina*, and, not at all jocosely but quite angrily, asked what business the fools had to be thinking of their Angelinas of the Strand ? Yet he knew that he ought to have been more patient. "Truth is that unless I write with rapidity, I write badly, and unless I read with rapidity I lose my grasp of the subject. It is curious that the word *μετάνοια*, which is chiefly used for *repentance*, is primi-

tively *after-thought* ; and the Italian painters call a correction a *pentimento*." He gave forcible illustration of this the day after writing it by sending, in amendment of a poem that had been in print more than fifty-four years, a correction which he had intended to make at its first publication, and through all those years had recollected. "I left my bed this morning at six, after lying awake since three, when I suddenly remembered a correction which I ought to have made fifty-four years ago." Withal there was a lurking dread, an always-present fear, that he was less familiar with the language than formerly, which made him often self-distrustful without occasion ; and I have had as many as half a dozen letters on the same day correcting in as many ways a correction found at last to be itself not necessary. Even yet I remember with a tender pity, ludicrous in their exaggeration as they were, his sufferings in connection with the first syllable in *flagrans*. He had made it short, but, visited with a sudden fear that it was long, had sent me three several emendations of it. He would have to cancel four pages, for now he felt only too certain of his deplorable oversight, stupidity, ignorance, — no name could be too hard ; but nobody else must ever know of it. It had kept him awake the whole previous twenty-four hours, and as he wrote he could no longer bid me good night, for it was already far into morning. But by the side of the letter of which this was the purport, and brought to me by the same post, lay another letter winding up the story. The second night, or morning, had proved sleepless as the first, and for some hours he had tossed restlessly about under torture of a fresh misgiving that he might at first have been right after all ; when suddenly, as the clock struck four on that winter morning, relief came in a remembered line from Virgil, and he sprang out of bed repeating the 331st verse of the first Georgic,

" Ille flāgranti,

Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo," &c.,

which he then and there set down in the letter that announced to me the close of his trial. He might as well have waited until daybreak, for he gained nothing by so sacrificing rest ; but it was his old impetuous way. He was always inflicting a needless trouble on himself and on me, and pleading still that each should be the last. "*Extremum hunc, Forstere, mihi concede laborem.*" A week later, a strophe was added to one of the poems in the middle of the night, of which I had next day the quite illegible pencil scrawl ; and I may remark, of one of the best of his Latin poems subsequent to this volume, written *Ad Heroïnam* amid the Italian excitements of 1849, and as much admired by Whewell of Trinity as by Aubrey de Vere, that this also was written with the like impetuosity, scrawled with pencil in the dark in the middle of the night, and in that condition sent to me.

We got through our printer's trials at last, so successfully that he believed the quickest eyes would not discover eight faults in the



whole eight thousand lines ; and then he was all eagerness for the publication, alleging two special reasons. Leipsic fair was coming on, the very market for such a book ; and before it could be taken notice of in England it must be got into France and Germany, if we would not have it prohibited in both ! Alas, he might have spared himself these anxieties. I never heard that anybody asked for it at Leipsic fair ; and sharp as were its epigrams against foreign as well as native rulers and statesmen, it may be doubted whether any one noticed them save a few ripe scholars. High opinions from Whewell, Macleane, and others, to the effect that there had been no better Latin poetry since the Virgilian age, were sent him by Julius Hare ; who added, for himself, that in spite of Landor's praise of Robert Smith, he suspected that the greatest Latin poet since Lucretius and Catullus was not Bobus, but a countryman of his.\*

The special result of the publication was rather for English than Latin readers. It led to the *Hellenics*. Its reception had justified my warning to him that the day was passed in which imagination or fancy could count for anything in a Latin composition, and that if he desired a judgment on his poetry rather than his Latinity, he must go before another bench. "You were right," he now suddenly announced to me. "My resolution is taken to send you a translation of all the Latin idyls, including my *Gebirus*, out of the *Poemata et Inscriptiones*. You shall have one a week ; and a project starts up before my mind. This is, to print them hereafter, together with the English" (he means the *Hellenics* already included in the Works), "in one small volume. It is better, if we can, to breathe life into such figures as Pygmalion's than into such as decorate our London tea-gardens." He kept his word, and the result was one of the most delightful of his books. The Latin became English idyls, retaining no trace of the coldness of translation, but all glowing and warm with original life. The Cupid and Pan, the Altar of Modesty, the Espousals of Polyxena, Dryope, Corythus, Pan and Pitys, Coresus and Callirhoë, Catillus and Salia, the Children of Venus, and the Last of Ulysses, were among those that thus took their place as English poems ; and a collection so rich and various of classical scenes and images, limiting the word as we do in sculpture and painting, and associating it with Greece and Rome, does not exist in any other single book in our literature. Let the Corythus be studied, to understand the full value of its contents. Beside its beauty and wealth of imagery, there is also much beauty of form. Each idyl is for the most part exactly what the word implies, a short poem of the heroic cast, a small image of something great, epic in character, and in treatment too. There is a splendid touch in the Ulysses, where you see that by depriving Circe of her youth and restoring hers to Penelope it is

\* For various preceding allusions to Landor's Latin compositions, on which he himself set such store, see *ante*, pp. 21, 64, 114, 184 (these refer to the *Gebirus* ; what follow chiefly to the *Idyllia Heroica*), 153, 154, 240, 251, 253, 262, 267, 268, 273, 278, 279, 288, 293, 296, 297. See, also, pp. 321, 387.

meant to show how Vice loses her charm and perishes, and how impotent is Time against Virtue ; but such meanings are never by way of sentiment obtruded. They are everywhere, but you must find them. It is not the eagerness to say everything, but the care to reject as much as possible, which impresses the reader throughout ; and there is always the absence of exaggeration. When Jove looks, there is no need that he should frown.

Wide-seeing Zeus lookt down ; as mortals knew  
By the woods bending under his dark eye,  
And huge towers shuddering on the mountain-tops,  
And stillness in the valley, in the wold,  
And over the deep waters all round earth.

Certainly this little book, which appeared at the close of 1847, gave convincing proof that up to this date Landor's powers even of fancy had not ebb'd a hand's breadth on the sands of time, seventy-three years wide.

#### X. SUMMER HOLIDAYS AND GUESTS AT HOME.

When I first visited Landor in Bath the city was only accessible by coach, and no coach left after eight o'clock in the morning. But these difficulties in the way of intercourse soon disappeared, and the travelling that had occupied two entire days took up little more than double the same number of hours. The first time Mr. Dickens went with me the railroad was open, and it had become possible to leave in the afternoon, dine and pass the evening with Landor, and breakfast the next morning in London. Still vividly remembered by us both are such evenings, when a night's sleep purchased for us cheaply the pleasure of being present with him on his birthday ; and I think it was at the first celebration of the kind in the first of his Bath lodgings, 35 St. James's Square, that the fancy which took the form of Little Nell in the *Curiosity Shop* first dawned on the genius of its creator. No character in prose fiction was a greater favorite with Landor. He thought that, upon her, Juliet might for a moment have turned her eyes from Romeo, and that Desdemona might have taken her hair-breadth escapes to heart, so interesting and pathetic did she seem to him ; and when, some years later, the circumstance I have named was recalled to him, he broke into one of those whimsical bursts of comical extravagance out of which arose the fancy of Boythorn. With tremendous emphasis he confirmed the fact, and added that he had never in his life regretted anything so much as his having failed to carry out an intention he had formed respecting it ; for he meant to have purchased that house, 35 St. James's Square, and then and there to have burnt it to the ground, to the end that no meaner association should ever desecrate the birth-place of Nell. Then he would pause a little, become conscious



of our sense of his absurdity, and break into a thundering peal of laughter.

Another of these evenings, when Mr. Dickens and myself had travelled to him expressly to celebrate his birthday, returning the same night to London, is worth recalling because of our talk having led to his writing the quatrain adopted afterwards as the motto to his *Last Fruit*. It was his own version of the moral of his own life in its aims and enjoyments; and, to all who could so accept it, a very terse and conclusive summing-up of Epicurean philosophy. But, on another subject, Landor also talked that night in a way that hardly befitted a true disciple of Epicurus, enlarging on the many tears that *David Copperfield* had caused him to shed; to which the author of that delightful book himself replied by a question, which, from so powerful and so gentle a master of both laughter and tears, startled us then, and may make the matter worth allusion still. "But is it not yet more wonderful that one of the most popular books on earth has absolutely nothing in it to cause any one either to laugh or cry?" Such, he proceeded to say, was to be affirmed with confidence of De Foe's masterpiece; he instanced the death of Friday, in that marvellous novel, as one of the least tender, and, in the true sense, least sentimental things ever written; and he accounted for the prodigious effect which the book has had upon an unexampled number and variety of readers, though without tears in it, or laughter, or even any mention of love, by its mere homely force and intensity of truth. Not every school-boy alone was interested by it, but every man who had ever been one. I may add, though connected with the night referred to solely by the subject thus introduced, that six years later, when a project was on foot to make provision for a then living and destitute descendant of the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, Landor sent a letter to the *Times* which brought us all the help we sought.

A line or two only can I give from its eloquent and touching appeal. "De Foe has left one descendant, — a Crusoe without a Friday, — in an island to him a desert. . . . There are men who may be warmed by the reflected glory of their ancestors; but, however elevated and unclouded, it falls feebly on the death-bed of the forsaken. . . . Daniel De Foe wants no statue, and is far beyond any other want; but, alas, there is one behind who is not so. Let all contribute one penny for one year: poor James De Foe has lived seventy-seven, and his dim eyes cannot look far into another. . . . It was in the power of Johnson to relieve the granddaughter of Milton; Mr. Editor, it is in yours to prop up the last scion of De Foe. If Milton wrote the grandest poem and the most energetic and eloquent prose of any writer in any country; if he stood erect before Tyranny, and covered with his buckler not England only, but nascent nations; if our great prophet raised in vision the ladder that rose from earth to heaven, with angels upon every step of it; lower indeed, but

not less useful, were the energies of De Foe. He stimulated to enterprise those colonies of England which extend over every sea, and which carry with them, from him, the spirit and the language that will predominate throughout the world. Achilles and Homer will be forgotten before Crusoe and De Foe." The poor old man soon after died; but the money obtained comforted his last days, and has since contributed to his daughter's wants. The pennies did not come in very freely, but some larger gifts were generously made. The late Lord Lansdowne sent me fifty pounds, and Lord Palmerston gave a hundred out of the Queen's bounty.

The visit to Landor last described was made in 1849, five years after he had crossed the bridge of seventy; and the post of the day following our return brought me the quatrain I have mentioned, which it may interest the reader to see, on the opposite leaf, in facsimile as it came. "My thanks were not spoken to you and Dickens for your journey of two hundred miles upon my birthday. Here they are, — not visible on the surface of the paper, nor on any surface whatever, but in the heart that is dictating this letter. On the night you left me I wrote the following DYING SPEECH OF AN OLD PHILOSOPHER: —

"I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;  
Nature I loved, and, next to Nature, Art;  
I warmed both hands against the fire of life;  
It sinks, and I am ready to depart."

In a previous section Landor's summer visits to his sister Elizabeth have been named. To her at Warwick he gave always, in each year, the largest part of all the time he passed away from Bath; but some small portion of every summer holiday, for many years, he gave to me in London, and of his ever-cordial reception at Gore House I have already spoken. He made visits regularly (and few gave him so much happiness) to Lady Sawle in Cornwall, and often to his friend Sir William Molesworth at Pencarrow; North Wales was familiar to him as long as Ablett lived; and deserving to be marked and set apart, for the pleasure they yielded as well to his friends as himself, were such visits as he paid to Archdeacon Hare at his living of Hurstmonceaux, to his brother Robert at his rectory of Birlingham, to Lord Nugent at The Lilies near Aylesbury, to Kenyon at his villa in Wimbledon or in the Isle of Wight, and to General Napier at Blackheath or Clapham Park. He exerted on these occasions a fascination that few could resist; enjoyment and good-humor so abounding, flashes and thunderbolts of wrath so harmless; and, whether a guest himself or receiving guests, attracting every one at such times by the courtliness of his manner, by an old-fashioned dignity never absent from his bearing, and withal by an absence from it, to a curious degree, of the self-assertion often loud and excessive in his writings. As on a former page Mr. Kirkup said of him, he was chivalresque of the old school; or, as I heard a more unsparing observer say, after a visit



My dear Foster, My thanks  
were not spoken to your ~~and~~ <sup>kind</sup> wishes  
for your journey of two hundred  
miles upon my birthday. Here  
they are - not visible on the  
surface of the paper, nor on  
any surface whatever but  
in the heart that is dictating  
this letter.

In the night of 2nd Sept  
"I wrote the following, which

You may regret or not in the  
examining.

Your affectionate Son

Dying friend of an Ed. philosopher.

I share w none for none was worth my  
Nature I loved and next to Nature I  
was mid both hands before the fire of life  
It isish; and I an ready to depart.

Walter Savage Landor



made to him in Bath, he was truly a royal kind of man. "I am expecting Mr. Carlyle on Wednesday," Landor wrote to me on the 25th of July, 1850: "it will be a holiday, a gaudy-day, for me." It was after that visit the remark just quoted was made to me. The evening so passed in Bath has to the survivor seemed always memorable. He brought away from it an impression never since effaced, not of the wrath only of the divine Achilles, though it thundered and lightened over many subjects, but of the manners that should belong also to such a leader of men; of a hospitality and courtesy in its way quite noble; and of scholarship, in the old fine and beautiful sense that the word once had, such as Carlyle had met with in no other man. Nor was the liking this meeting left behind it less strong on the other side. "I am a great advocate for hero-worship," Landor wrote to me two years after the visit; "and when you have looked closely into Carlyle you may discover him to be quite as much of a hero as Cromwell."

From a hero cast in a different mould, but who has since had one of the greatest parts to play in the world which can be appointed to any man, he received also a visit in Bath which dates a few years earlier, some months after the escape from Ham of the Prince Louis Napoleon. "Colonel Jervis told me yesterday," Landor wrote to me on August 28, 1846, "that Prince Louis Napoleon was in Bath, and had done me the favor to mention me, and I shall therefore leave my card at his hotel."\* The office of master of the ceremonies was in those days not extinct in the city of Beau Nash, and Colonel Jervis was the last who held it. Three or four days later he wrote again. "Yesterday I had a visit from the Prince Louis Bonaparte, who told me he had completed his military work and would give me a copy. In return for this civility I told him I should certainly have requested his acceptance of my Works, only that they contained some severe strictures on his uncle the emperor. He said he knew perfectly well my opinions, and admired the honesty with which I expressed them on all occasions. He came on purpose to invite me to meet Lady Blessington to-morrow. He had called once before. I told him, in the course of our interview, that he had escaped two great curses, — a prison and a throne. He smiled at this, but made no remark." The Prince kept his promise; and from the book which he gave to Landor, *Etudes sur le Passé et l'Avenir de l'Artillerie par le Prince Napoléon-Louis Bonaparte*, and which is now in my possession, I may, perhaps to the greater satisfaction of the reader, present what the author had written on the fly-leaf ("A Monsieur W. S. Landor, témoigne d'estime de la part du P<sup>ce</sup> Napoléon Louis B. qui apprécie le vrai mérite quelque opposé qu'il soit à ses sentimens et à son opinion. Bath, 6 Sept., 1846") in another fac-simile.

\* In an account of Landor written shortly after his death it was stated that at the very time of his thus meeting Louis Napoleon in Bath, "there was in a boarding-school twelve miles off, on the Clifton downs, a pretty girl — grand-niece to a maiden lady living in a very small house at Dumfries — who is now Empress of France."

*A Monsieur W. P. Landor  
 témoin d'estime de la part du  
 S<sup>r</sup> Napoléon Louis B. qui apprécie le  
 vrai mérite quelque opposé qu'il soit  
 à ses sentimens et à ses opinions.  
 Bath 6 Sept. 1845*

If amid the splendors of his later destiny it has ever happened to the Emperor of France to think there might be truth in what Landor then said to him, and that a throne was not, after all, the supremest of earthly blessings, one may fancy it likely to have occurred to him amid the horrors of the Orsini massacre twelve years later. Two years before that miserable attempt, in the same city of Bath, Orsini had been Landor's guest. He had gone to him with letters from Italians in London of high character and moderate opinions, Piedmontese; and there is no doubt that up to and beyond that date (1856) the unhappy man did really believe in Piedmont as the hope of Italy, that he quarrelled with Mazzini on this ground, and that, during the early part of his residence in England, he had been honestly exerting himself to discover in its direction help for the rest of Italy. Baffled in this hope, he projected, under other influences, the enterprise at once so cruel and so wicked: cruel, because, even supposing him capable of justifying to himself, which certainly no man could to another, an enterprise aimed at what he held to be a guilty life, this involved also innocent lives, and among them those of women and children. In the excitement of the time Landor was publicly named as friendly to Orsini's later opinions, and he was at some pains himself as publicly to declare that the imputation was grossly unjust.

I satisfied myself then that it was so. It is true that Orsini dined with him; but another gentleman still living was present, and it is certain that nothing could have passed at that interview respecting the French emperor inconsistent with the strong opinion which Landor undoubtedly entertained at the time, that his death would be a calamity both to England and France. He had joined in an address from Bath sent up to Napoleon on his visit to England, and this appears to have been the subject of some remonstrance on Orsini's part; whereupon Landor's friend, Mr. Sandford, well known also to myself for moderation as well as wisdom in his opinions, joined Landor in advising the Italian to forbear from any declaration then against the



ruler of France. "Miserable Orsini!" Landor wrote to me in January, 1858, the day after the fatal attempt: "he sat with me two years ago at the table on which I am now writing. Dreadful work! horrible crime! To inflict death on a hundred for the sin of one! Such a blow can serve only to awaken tyranny, reverberating on the brass helmets of her satellites."\*

In the same letter to which this was a postscript he had reminded me of an evening passed with me in London eight years before, when he met Macaulay, whose History he had now only lately made acquaintance with, and found less satisfactory than his *Lays of Rome*. "I sat next him at your table and tried to enter into conversation with him, telling him that he and Livy were under mutual obligations; and that I doubted whether in his *Ballads of Rome* he was most indebted to Livy or Livy to him. It would not do. Yet it was no small compliment, for there was hardly a genius so exalted as Livy's in all the interval between Æschylus and Dante. But there are some who do not know it, and this was probably the case with Macaulay. I knew at Florence his uncle General Macaulay, an excellent man, who showed me a very elegant *Imaginary Conversation* by his nephew, which must

\* I shall probably be forgiven for preserving some extracts from a letter of my own to Landor (found among his papers) replying at this date to what he had written of some supposed recollections of mine concerning the Prince, which I was unable to confirm. I make no apology for printing them exactly as written: the lady named as one of the only survivors of the dinner-party referred to in them having since herself passed away.

"... You are however right as to the meeting of which Lady Blessington told you. On the first day of Louis Napoleon's arrival in London after the escape from Ham, I formed one of a party of five, Lady Blessington, D'Orsay, Marguerite Power, her sister Ellen, and myself, who sat down with him to dinner at Gore House. He, Miss Power, and myself are the survivors of the party, to whom, after dinner, he described his way of escape by passing through the fortress-gates in a laborer's blouse and sabots, with a heavy plank on his shoulder, flinging off the plank into the ditch by the wall of the chateau, and afterward, shod as he was, running nearly two miles to where a little cart provided by Comeau waited to take him within reach of the coast, from which he had crossed but the day before: all of it told in his usual un-French way without warmth or excitement. Before or since I have never seen his face as it was then; for he had shaved his mustaches as part of his disguise, and his lower and least pleasing features were completely exposed under the straggling stubble of hair beginning again to show itself. He gave me afterwards, with an inscription to me on the fly-leaf written by himself, a book which I still keep called the *Prisoner of Ham*, with a clever pen-and-ink sketch not unlike him as he was in those days. The only other real talk with him that I particularly remember was about Cromwell. D'Orsay had given him exaggerated accounts, in his high-flown good-natured way, of a memoir of the Protector by me; and this led to my entering on one occasion, at his request, into some detail of explanation as to the conferences preceding Cromwell's rejection of the Crown: another thing referred to, as I well remember, being the essay written by Cowley, whose play-actor theory he rejected, expressing his belief in Oliver's downright sincerity. Oddly enough, as these things come back to me, I find I also know something of the man Allsop, in whose name Orsini's passport was made out, and who is accused of complicity in Orsini's crime. I met him at Charles Lamb's, in the last year of Elia's life. He had given Coleridge £200 on some occasion to help him in a distress; and so had recommended himself to Lamb. He afterwards published, without his name, a wonderfully foolish book called *Recollections and Letters of Coleridge*. And now, I perceive, £200 is offered here in Scotland Yard for his apprehension as accessory to murder. Vanity is the never-failing lever by which men of this sentimental sort may at all times be lifted out of the flat commonplace of their silliness and good intentions, into any kind of monstrous enterprise."

have been one of his earliest writings ; and which he said was written in consequence of mine. My first two volumes had been published only a few months before." He was better pleased with Milman, who delighted him on one occasion by repeating very humorously a suppressed stanza of the *Devil's Walk*, written by Southey at a time (already referred to in this memoir\*) when Lord Lonsdale had greatly exasperated both him and Wordsworth, wherein the Devil was compared to the lord of the dale. Landor's prolonged roar of laughter at this, and Milman's own enjoyment of those peals of mirth as they rose and rose again, were things rememberable. But one of Landor's greatest London favorites, of those who were not among his intimate friends, was the author of the *Pleasures of Memory*. He always got on well with Rogers, of whom he saw something at nearly all his visits to London, as well at St. James's Place as at Kenyon's house and mine ; and with whom kindly messages were frequently interchanged. "Poor Rogers !" he wrote on hearing of his accident : "I think of him much in that sad and silent captivity of his bedroom. When he goes, if a star of the first magnitude will not have set, a bright lamp at the dinner-table will have gone out. No man told a story better, or loved art so well."

His own love of art he indulged on these occasions by passing a portion of nearly every day in the National Gallery, where his chief favorite was Hogarth. "What nonsense I see written of Hogarth's defects as a colorist," he wrote to me after one of his visits. "He was in truth far more than the most humorous, than the most pathetic and most instructive, of painters. He excelled at once in composition, in drawing, and in coloring ; and of what other can we say the same ? In his portraits he is as true as Gainsborough, as historical as Titian. It is equally fortunate and wonderful that we have good examples of him in our National Gallery." At the Academy exhibitions he had great enjoyment. "If I pluck up courage to move Londonward this spring," he wrote in 1851, "it cannot be earlier than July, when I have promised Kenyon to spend a week with him at Wimbledon. I shall stand again before the wonders of Landseer, Mulready, and Maclise, and look once more on the waves about Ischia, over which your Neptunian friend *motos præstat componere fluctus*. For surely Stanfield is god of the sea. But perhaps it is because my heart lies usually among the animals (so do men call them, not intending any compliment), that the dying solitary stag of Landseer made an impression upon me beyond them all. There are two men, Hogarth and Landseer, who affect my heart the most deeply of all painters, and Raffael alone can detain me so long a time before him." Of music he was also passionately fond ; and though he gave away, from time to time, almost every book possessed by himself, he had extraordinary enjoyment in wandering up and down a library belonging to a friend.

This pleasure always awaited him at Julius Hare's house and at mine, and welcomes, he would truly say, counted by as many thousands

\* See *ante*, p. 142.



as our books ; our Dii Lares and Dii Penates, as he told me it was Parr's unvarying custom to say (though he never could explain the difference between them), all bowing down before him ; and such attentions paid him on every side as he would protest that he had never received since what he called the heroic ages, when epistles were written him by conquered heroines. I heard from him during his first visit to Hurstmonceaux (I think in 1843), when Hare and his friend Bunsen were engaged in the pious duty of doing honor to the memory of Arnold, and had solicited Landor's help towards a Latin inscription, which was to have for its model the famous one on the Scipios. It was Landor's belief, in which he was surely right, that there was not only much difficulty, but a want of keeping and of fitness, in applying classical Latin to the commemoration of Christian thoughts and Christian relations ; but his corrections of what had been written were gratefully received, and, in the state wherein finally it left his hands, it expressed worthily two of the most marked characteristics of Arnold's life ; his constant effort to uphold the liberty of the Christian laity against all hierarchal usurpations, and his unwearying endeavor to make Christianity not a dead form of words, but a living and actuating principle in the minds and hearts of his pupils. Landor's old school-days at Rugby gave him a personal interest in everything connected with the place, and with infinite gratification he received, some years later, a famous record of Rugby school-days very wonderfully contrasting with his own, which had been sent as a tribute from Tom Brown to the most famous of living Rugbæans. "I am sure," wrote the author of this delightful book, "you will feel that the approval of no living man can give the author more pleasure than that of the oldest and most distinguished of those who have been educated at the same school with himself."

The enjoyment of one of his visits to Hurstmonceaux had been greatly enhanced by meeting there the hero of Scinde, the brother of his friend the historian. His admiration for both these extraordinary men amounted almost to a passion. After Wellington, his ideal of a great captain, he thought Charles the most illustrious of soldiers ; and after Livy, to him the very genius of history, he thought William the most powerful and the most picturesque of historians. Their particular bearing towards each other had also a wonderful charm for him, by its very contrast with their general attitude towards nearly all the world beside ; and I well remember with what a glow of emotion he repeated to me almost the first words addressed to him by the elder of the brothers, declaring that the antique world had nothing to show more touching of the Scipios or the Gracchi. Modestly disclaiming his title to the homage which Landor was offering him, the great soldier bade him reserve it for his brother William alone. "This brother," he said, "is indeed an extraordinary man. All *his* fame he has earned by the unaided force of his genius. My soldiers fought *me* through my work and errors." In such a saying one may find some

clew to the devoted attachment felt for both the brothers by all who had kindly or near association with them. With frailties of temper that too often presented to the outer world only what seemed arrogant or self-willed : in all the inner relations they were unselfish to a fault, tender and humane as the gentlest of women, chivalrous, simple, and brave. Not that Landor was at all given to observe any such distinctions in his liking for them. It is more probable that he did not admire them least when their judgments were warped the most, for he made all their quarrels his own ; though it is only fair to add that the heat of temper and impetuosity of language with which he fought their battles were as free as their own from anything ungenerous or unworthy. "You don't draw your ale mild," wrote William Napier to him on one occasion, "any more than I do ; but if Pam or Johnny call you out, I will be your second."

There was indeed, between Landor and the younger of the brothers, a liking confirmed by long personal intimacy, which was hardly capable of increase on either side ; and which had begun, on the part of Napier, before Landor was personally known to him. No fame had been dearer to the Peninsula captain than that of his old chief who fell at Corunna. By the splendor of his life, the glory of his death, and the injustice done to his memory, the career of Sir John Moore had fulfilled, to the ardent young soldier's imagination, the uncommon exploits as well as common fate of a hero ; and in his maturer years Napier never forgot, that, when Moore's rude grave had hardly closed, Landor was in the field to do battle for him against one of his own dearest friends.\* Differences of opinion Napier had with Landor, and some not slight, but none that were not covered by a kindly tolerance. He could forgive him his onslaughts on the soldiery of Napoleon, though he would never let them disturb his own faith in it, as to which, he would say, he was as a rock, around which Landor, like the ocean, might rage as he would. "If you will, you may submerge me, but you cannot shake me." Nay, he could even tolerate an allusion of Landor's which he thought unfair to the memory of Charles Fox. "I own to having been grieved for the moment," he wrote ; "but we differ as to so many public men, that this passed away instantly ; because there is one public man upon whose character we are entirely and always agreed, namely, Walter Savage Landor. I know he is all truth, and sincerity, and honor, in feeling ; and therefore his opinions, though as in the instance of Mr. Fox they may grieve, can never make me angry. It is a different way of looking at a picture, nothing more." In another letter to Landor of the same date (1851) he protests against a comparison of him to an American writer, made in one of the journals. "Your vagaries, if I may without offending you use the word, are, in comparison with this man's, the gambols and boundings of a lion, from light to shade and back again, to the mere mouthings and grimaces of a monkey at the

\* See *ante*, pp. 144, 145.



moon." Nor was Landor ever left in doubt of the value of his own good word to Napier, who repeatedly assured him, with affecting earnestness, that his genius was not a greater pleasure for all the world than his friendly feelings toward himself were a delight to him personally. "I need not," he wrote, in one of the last of his letters written with his own hand (18th April, 1857), — "I need not tell you now, my dear Landor, that your praise is manna to me ; for, though I am not in a desert as to praise, most of it appears dry and unprofitable in comparison with yours. Not all, though ; some others there are who give me quails."

Such grateful offerings made directly to Landor himself require no confirmation ; but for other reasons a few more words may be added from Napier's defence of Landor to a friend who did not know him, from a charge of having favored assassination in a letter defending tyrannicide. Napier himself will be forgotten before its touching opening sentences. "This," the 10th of November, 1856, "is the anniversary of the battle of the Nivelle, in which I won my lieutenant-colonelcy. I was then strong and swift of foot ; only one man got into the rocks of La Rhune before me, and he was but a step ; yet eight hundred noble veterans, strong as lions, were striving madly to be first. I am now old, feeble, bent, miserable, and my eyes are dim, very dim, with weeping for my lost child ; and my brain is weak also ; I cannot read with pleasure, and still less can I think and judge of what other people write. You must not therefore expect from me an essay on Landor's noble letter ; and it would require an essay, it is so full of meaning. I call it noble while differing on many points pushed out by him like needles against the world and its opinions and conventionalism. I call it noble, I say, because it is not Landor's writing, but Landor himself, bold, generous, brave, and reckless where his feelings as a human being are stirred. I have myself no objection to the death of King Bomba, or any other ruffian like him ; hang them as high as Haman : but once allow tyrannicide, and the best man in the world is no longer safe. Well, but this mistake does not make Landor obnoxious to anybody who knows him, because it is not his feeling ; he is reckless in expression only, not in deeds. And again I say his letter *is Landor*, bold, original, and vigorous, his right and his wrong alike. He is an oak with many gnarled branches and queer excrescences, but always an oak, and one that will be admired for ages." \*

In the summer of the year before this letter was written, Landor had paid his last visit to London, and seen Napier there for the last time. It had become very difficult now to persuade him to leave Bath. He was readier than formerly with excuses for not visiting us. His excuses were sometimes the reverse of complimentary, as when he explained (1853) his disinclination to come to the great city,

\* *Ante*, p. 577. And see the remarks made at the close of the fourth Book, *ante*, pp. 302, 304.

because there if he saw three men he might be pretty sure that a couple of them were scoundrels, while out of the same number in the country it might be doubted if the villanous proportion would be more than one. The following year he gave a more touching reason, somewhat nearer the truth. "I too often think at night of what I had been seeing in the morning, poor mothers, half-starved children, and girls habitually called unfortunate by people who drop the word as lightly as if it had no meaning in it. Little do they think that they are speaking of the fallen angels; the real ones, not the angels of mythology and fable. So many heart-aches always leave me one."

At last however he again came to us in 1855. He desired to see the palace at Sydenham, and my old friend Sir Joseph Paxton had promised to set the great fountains playing in his honor. I took rooms for him in the hotel adjoining; and a part of the time he passed with Napier, dining with him at Clapham Park, and inducing him to come over to his hotel. A few lines from a letter to Lady Sawle, written at the close of this visit, will very succinctly describe it, and the persons it enabled him to see. "I found my old friend," he writes (July, 1855), "in better health than I expected. He had never seen the Crystal Palace. Lame as he is, he came over the following day with Lady Napier, and we went together over the whole of it. And only fancy, the great fountains were set playing for me! The beautiful N. showed me her little girl, who was very amiable with me, as little girls always were: I mean very little ones. I was obliged to declare to Lady Napier that if she spoilt her grandchild, I would never make her a proposal. I spent some hours too with Kossuth, who could not dine with me and Forster, because he had to receive a deputation quite unexpected; and by no means the smallest part of my pleasure was the introduction to me, the following day, of Mr. Lytton. None of the younger poets of the present day breathes so high a spirit of poetry. Of what impressed me most in the palace itself I should tell you that I saw the statue of Satan by —, and the wonderful picture of Cimabue and Giotto by —. Alas! alas! every name flies off from my memory when I would seize it. Leighton, I should have said, is the painter: the sculptor is Lough." In making this holiday visit, it was his intention to have gone with me at its close to pass a few days with Kenyon at Cowes; but when the time came he pleaded his eighty years, and, with amusing exaggeration of Southampton Water into a rolling tempestuous sea, protested that if he were to indulge his wish to accompany me, I should have to borrow a shroud from some sailor, and a couplet from Tibullus, made to fit:—

*"Hic jacet immiti consumptus morte viator,  
Forsterum terrâ dum sequiturque mari."*

This was his last visit to London: indeed his last absence from Bath, until he quitted it forever, with one exception. He went once more to Llanthony. "Alas, my dear friend," he wrote in January,



1856, "I would rather undertake a voyage to Babylon than to London. One sorrowful task is imposed on me, — to take two ladies to my abbey. Sad scene! sad remembrances! Forty-three years have passed since I saw the place, and never had I wished to see it again." A few days later brought me nevertheless my usual summons on his birthday: —

"I am, but would not be, a hermit:  
Forster! come hither and confirm it.  
I may not offer 'beechen bowl,'  
But I can give you soup and sole,  
Sherry and (grown half mythic) port . . .  
Wise men would change their claret for 't;  
Quince at dessert, and apricot . . .  
In short, with you what have I not?"

Even our meetings on that day were now to close, as he too surely predicted in a touching letter after our last celebration of it. "It appears to me that neither of us will have anything more to say on that subject. However, I have enjoyed better health this winter, such as it has been, than in almost any other since I left my paradise in Italy. Strength alone fails me in the corporeal, and memory in the mental. I remember what I would forget, and I forget what I would remember. I have nothing to do now but to look into the fire, and see it burn down, as I myself have done. Solitude was always dear to me; and at present more than ever; once a playful friend, and now a quiet nurse. Scarcely a soul of my old acquaintance is left in Bath. All have departed; the most part to that country where there neither are nor ever will be railroads. I must perforce remain where I am. I have only one more journey to make, and I hope it may be by an express train. I was very near taking my ticket a little while ago, and now stop only in the waiting-room." Within the last few years, death had indeed been busy around him; and it remains that I should give brief mention of his losses in this way, and the penalties he was paying for extreme old age.

## XI. DEATHS OF OLD FRIENDS.

The first loss by which Lander suffered keenly was that of Joseph Ablett, to whose generous kindness he first owed his Fiesolan villa. We were under promise together to visit Llanbedr in the spring of 1848; when, early in the January of that year, our loss was announced to us. "Poor dear Ablett!" Lander wrote: "at whose house we were to meet in the spring, died on the 9th, and I can remember few things that have caused tears to burst forth from me as this did. Never was there so kind-hearted a man. His manner (though never to us) often seemed cold: but even then there was a hot spring gushing from a vast depth through a glacier. I heard almost at the same time of the death of a companion of my early childhood, on whose marriage I think I wrote my first verses;\* but

\* His cousin, Mrs. Shuckburgh: see *ante*, p. 17.

her loss has grieved me incomparably less than that of my later friend. Good, generous Ablett! one more tear for thee!" He never would admit that age, which remembered its sorrows longer than youth, had even the poor advantage of feeling them less acutely.

The following year carried off the brother next to himself in years. "My brother Charles," he wrote to me on the 8th July, 1849, "the liveliest, wittiest, most energetic and independent of men, is lying on his death-bed. This very instant a letter tells me he is dead." The handsomest of the family in person, Charles Landor had singularly genial and pleasant manners, and, though too passionately fond of field-sports and out-door occupations to have time for cultivation of the pursuits that attracted his brothers, had many of the accomplishments in which they excelled, with a much keener observation in the affairs of life. Exactly a month before this death of his brother there had come the news of Lady Blessington's, and the way in which this affected her old friend has been seen. "Yet why," he wrote to me, "call it sad? It was the very mode of departure she anticipated and desired: as I do too." Before the year closed he had also himself a warning. Death had taken aim at him and missed him, he said; but let the next be more successful, if so he might be spared the sorrowing over friends. "Let him take another as soon as he pleases but pass by those I love." A vain wish, as he knew well.

Ah! he strikes all things, all alike,  
But bargains: those he will not strike.

After not many months he lost another friend for whose summons to a promised visit at Aylesbury in the autumn of 1850 we were both waiting when the sad intelligence came. During the two preceding years Landor had seen much of Lord Nugent, and his allusions to him in casual verses were frequent. The Hungarian war had roused the warmest zeal of both, and they took unwearied delight in rendering service to such of the leaders of that gallant people as were in England after the struggle. I was witness to Landor's grief when he heard that our friend was taken from us, and I strongly sympathized with an opinion he expressed publicly at the time that Nugent had deserved better treatment than his party gave him. Some public men are unlucky, and he has been longer remembered by a joke of Canning's than for qualities of his own deserving the highest respect. He was a courageous and consistent politician, and few men had been so at the cost of greater worldly sacrifices. To Landor he was further endeared by social characteristics of the pleasantest kind; and perhaps by some resemblances in temperament, which made them both, as the survivor confessed, apt to be ardent after impracticable things.

"We schemed such projects as we might  
In younger days with better right.  
Athens was ours; and who but we  
Shouted along Thermopylæ!"



More of his Irish than of his English stock was indeed to be observed in Nugent. He did not inherit from his mother his title only. Her father was Lord Clare, to whom the Haunch of Venison was written; and his grandson had not a little of the genial nature, the cordial tastes, the respectable talents for literature, even the reported portliness of person, which distinguished Goldsmith's friend, who had himself written that ode to Pulteney which contains the masterly verse quoted by Gibbon in his character of Brutus.

The next of Landor's friends who passed away had been the heroine of much of his minor poetry. To her were addressed, amid many others as tender and graceful, the lovely lines in which he describes himself, when first she separated from him and crossed the sea, as having no power to rest

But on the very thought that swells with pain.  
O bid me hope again!  
O give me back what earth, what (without you)  
Not heaven itself can do,  
One of the golden days that we have past;  
And let it be my last!  
Or else the gift would be, however sweet,  
Fragile and incomplete.

"I have lost my beloved friend of half a century, Jane, the Countess de Molandè," he wrote to me on the 3d of August, 1851. "She died at Versailles on the last of July, after sixteen hours' illness. This most afflicting intelligence was sent me by her son William, who was with her at the last hour. She will be brought over to the family vault, in county Meath, of her first husband, Swifte, great-great-grandson of the uncle of the Dean of St. Patrick. I hoped she might have seen my grave. Hers I shall never see, but my thoughts will visit it often. Though other friends have died in other days (why cannot I help this running into verse) One grave there is where memory sinks and stays." It was to see Landor at his very best to see him in the presence of this lady. In language, manner, look, voice, even in the minutest points of gesture and bearing, it was all that one could possibly imagine of the perfection of chivalrous respect. Even when I first saw her, a bright good-humored Irish face was all her beauty, but youth still lingered in her eyes and hair; and a little scene between her and Landor at the interview was perfectly expressed in a few lines of dialogue written by him next day.

*M.* Why, who now in the world is this?  
It cannot be the same . . . I miss  
The gift he always brought . . . a kiss.  
Yet still I know my eyes are bright,  
And not a single hair turned white.

*L.* O idol of my youth! upon  
That joyous head gray hair there's none,  
Nor may there ever be! gray hair  
Is the unthrifty growth of Care,  
Which she has planted — you see where.

Two years later brought the same fatal summons for one who

during many years had been held in high esteem by all the Landor family. Mr. Rosenhagen died in the middle of the December of 1853; and when my old friend wrote to me as usual on Christmas day, the event was painfully affecting him. "Merry Christmases (that is the right word, and no other will do) are mostly over with childhood, though they sometimes boisterously burst into the circle when they ought to be abed. I am in perfectly good health, but my upper teeth are as useless as the fleets in the Euxine; and of all infidelities the worst is their secession. I have been very sad too since the loss of my friend Rosenhagen. In writing the name my hand trembles. Never was there a better man or more perfect gentleman. With his father and himself and Thomas Grenville have passed away any remaining chances of discovering the writer of Junius. However, it matters little, — Johnson's letter to Chesterfield is worth them all, admirable as they are."

But the year then beginning, his eightieth, was to be the saddest of all to him. It opened with the death of the last survivor of those who had known him at Bath at the beginning of the century. "My earliest Bath friend," he wrote to me on the 6th of February, 1854, "Miss Caldwell, sister to good dear Lady Belmore, of whose death I so lately wrote to you, died a few days ago. I had known them since the beginning of the century. Alas! I feel that I am gone very far down the vale of years: a vale in which there is no fine prospect on either side, and the few flowers are scarcely worth the gathering." Nor had the month thus mournfully opened come to its close before a much sadder loss had fallen on him. The companion of his childhood, his eldest and only surviving sister, Elizabeth, died in the family house at Warwick. Her illness had not been serious at first, and to the end there seemed to be hope: but on the 2d of March he wrote to me that he had lost his earliest, dearest, and nearly his last friend; and that grief had taken away his sleep, appetite, digestion, everything. It was indeed a hard and heavy blow, though there was much to soften it in the many memorials she left of a tender regard that had survived and been true to him through all his life's vicissitudes.

His letters for some time bore the trace of grief in even the tone with which they spoke of ordinary things; and one of them, written little more than a month after this last great loss, in which he described himself watching the lights of a Bath sunset disappear, and thinking of the friends who like them had gone out as suddenly, I felt to be very touching at the time. "What delightful weather! Last evening" (8th April, 1854) "I walked in the park, and saw the sun gradually illuminate the whole of Marlborough buildings, window after window, six or seven at the time. Many of my old friends lived there, and went away in like manner, one after another. This evening I took my usual walk a little earlier, and, sitting afterwards without candles for about an hour as I always do, I have had the



same feeling as I watched the twilight darken on my walls, and my pictures vanish from before me. I make no change in these lines, but write them as they have risen to my mind :—

My pictures blacken in their frames  
As night comes on,  
And youthful maids and wrinkled dames  
Are now all one.

Death of the Day! a sterner Death  
Did worse before:  
The fairest form and balmiest breath  
Away he bore."

As the same year wore on, he saw too surely another grief preparing for him. He wrote to me in July of the illness of Julius Hare ; and soon after, on his friend's expressed wish to see him, he went to Hurstmonceaux, from which I received soon after some verses written by him on his friend's having placed in his hands a small unpublished poem of Wordsworth's.

"Derwent! Winander! your twin poets come  
Star-crowned along with you, nor stand apart.  
Wordsworth comes hither, hither Southey comes,  
His friend and mine, and every man's who lives,  
Or who shall live when days far off have risen.  
Here are they with me yet again, here dwell  
Among the sages of antiquity,  
Under his hospitable roof whose life  
Surpasses theirs in strong serenity,  
Whose genius walks more humbly, stooping down  
From the same height to cheer the weak of soul  
And guide the erring from the tortuous way.  
Hail, ye departed! hail, thou later friend,  
Julius! but never by my voice invoked  
With such an invocation . . . *hail, and live!*"

It was, alas ! rather fear than hope that had suggested this earnest prayer ; for, though the good archdeacon had rallied somewhat, Landor left him with the feeling that they would not meet again ; and the last letter addressed to him by Julius he received not many weeks later.

It spoke of matters they had talked about together, and especially of an old mulberry-tree in the garden at Warwick celebrated in Landor's verse. The ancient gods and heroes, said Julius, had each his favorite plant ; and there were other reasons, which he had tried to express in unaccustomed verse, why Landor should have the mulberry.

Of yore in Babylon the mulberry  
Changed color at fond lovers' misery;  
In England, to her noblest poets dear,  
It keeps the records of glad friendships here:  
'T was SHAKESPEARE'S, MILTON'S, now 't is LANDOR'S tree;  
Precious to those who love the gifted three.

The letter also made pathetic reference to the effect on Sir William Napier of the death of his brother Sir Charles in the previous year, and ended with words very memorable to me, and worthy to have closed the intercourse of two such friends. "The great men of Eng-

land seem to be passing away, those at least of that great generation whose youth was kindled and stirred by the first French Revolution. But one of them remains, my friend Walter Landor, and may he still remain as long as his spirit is not too impatient to escape from the decay of the body. It is perhaps well that the influence which first moved you to the resentment of injustice should be with you to the end." (Landor had sent him a new *Conversation* having for its subject the politics of the day.) "There are still so many painful things in the actual state of the world, so much wrong and so much folly, that it may probably be the duty of those who see these evils clearly, and feel the mischief of them strongly, to do all they can to expose and redress them. But it is the very pressure of such evils that makes *me* desire more earnestly to be borne away from them by some of those visions of beauty and tenderness which you in former times raised up for me, or by more of that intercourse with sages and heroes which led me not to the treasures of antiquity alone, but to those that lie in our own native speech. The Greek and Roman dialogues you have printed separately; but I have always had a strong wish to see a selection made of the more purely poetical and dramatic dialogues, including almost all in which there are female speakers. It would be one of the most beautiful books in the language, or, what is the same thing, in the world."

Hare survived only until the middle of January, 1855. He had been again a prisoner from illness for a month, but nothing immediately dangerous was apprehended; when suddenly he grew rapidly worse, and died on the morning of Tuesday the 23d in his sixtieth year. From one of the mourners at his death-bed Landor heard the sad intelligence, in a letter written two days later. "How often your friend spoke of you. *Dear Landor!* he used to say; *I hope we shall meet once more.* Yes, but not on earth." It was to this Landor referred in lines sent to me on the 27th. "I sit up in bed to write what pressed upon me this morning. Poor Julius was hardly sixty. In three days I shall enter on my eighty-first year. Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage. I am outliving all my friends, and it is time for me to go and join those who are gone before me. Already memory and strength are gone, and surely my days are numbered.

"Julius! how many hours have we  
Spent with the sage and bard of old!  
In wisdom none surpassing thee,  
In truth's bright armor none more bold.

"By friends around thy bed in death  
My name from those pure lips was heard.  
O Fame! how feebler all thy breath  
Than Virtue's one expiring word!"

Towards the close of the same year, too, he lost a friend for whom he had a thoroughly genuine admiration and regard. "I am grieving, and shall grieve long," he wrote to me (25th October, 1855), "for Sir William Molesworth. When, on that desert heath the House of



Commons, will three such men for honest and useful work, as himself and Hume and Peel, ever meet again? Poor Sir William! The last time we met was at Pencarrow. We started a *stote* near the pool, and both ran after it, might and main. I ran faster than *stote* or baronet; but the creature must have been bred on Whig land, for he doubled, and fairly escaped us."

The following year brought a much greater loss, and the name with which my melancholy list must close is that of one very dear to us both. The good, joyous, generous Kenyon died in December, 1856, thinking of his friends to the last; and finding it his happiness in death, as it had been through life, to provide for the welfare and enjoyment of all who had ever been associated with enjoyments of his own. "This indeed is a sad grief," Landor wrote to me, "after a quarter of a century's friendship. He was the kindest, the most genial of men, ever known to me. I never saw a cloud upon his face. There was not a word he uttered, not a letter he wrote, that did not carry on its surface some ray of light from the happiness he was spreading around him."

Yet why should I scruple to add another name? Landor had lost in this year also the little Pomeranian dog who had been for more than twelve years his constant and sprightly companion. "Pomero, dear Pomero died this evening" (10th March, 1856) "at about four o'clock. I have been able to think of nothing else." "Everybody in this house," he wrote a few days later, "grieves for Pomero. The cat lies day and night upon his grave; and I will not disturb the kind creature, though I want to plant some violets upon it, and to have his epitaph placed around his little urn.

"O urna! nunquam sis tuo eruta hortulo:  
Cor intus est fidele, nam cor est canis.  
Vale, hortule! aeternumque, Pomero! vale.  
Sed, si datur, nostri memor."

## XII. FRUITS GATHERED FROM AN OLD TREE.

To a republication in 1853 of Conversations, Critical Essays, Poems, and Miscellaneous Prose Pieces, all of which had been written, with few exceptions, in the interval of seven years since the collection of his Works, Landor gave the title of *Last Fruit off an Old Tree*; and allusion has already been made to such of it as consisted of new Conversations, or of critical studies on Theocritus, Catullus, and Petrarch. It remains, however, generally to speak of its other contents, and to bring under the same pretty and pathetic title, to which it more strictly applies, the yield of still later fruit from the old tree; or, in other words, such additions to Landor's writings as were either published, or collected with a view to publication, under the titles respectively of *Scenes for a Study*, *Dry Sticks*, and *Hellenics Enlarged*, before he finally departed for Italy in 1858.

The principal prose pieces of the *Last Fruit*, apart from its reviews,

were nineteen chapters on "Popery British and Foreign," and ten letters of a true believer to Cardinal Wiseman, laughing at the public alarm in 1850 over papal aggression, and condemning more gravely the legislation that followed. "As if fifty cardinals in England," he wrote to me (and the remark will sufficiently describe his view of the case), "could do us damage to the amount of five farthings!" The High-Church view in either communion, Protestant or Popish, had nevertheless small comfort or support for him. In the course of his chapters there is an eloquent passage on the services of Methodism in reclaiming, at a critical time, the most profligate of the people from turbulence and crime. On one side is the gentle and virtuous Wesley, bringing about him as great multitudes as ever surrounded the earlier apostles, and working as great marvels in their hearts; while on the other are the beneficed clergy everywhere setting their faces against him, "and angry faces they are, partly from old prejudices, and partly from old port." In another chapter there is masterly ridicule of any argument against extravagant sacerdotal pretensions drawn from our modern enlightenment and learning: the enlightenment represented by a few altar-candles extinguishable at pleasure, and as for the learning! — "Learning was never so highly cultivated in Italy as when Muretus delivered an oration eulogistic of Catherine de' Medici in celebration of the massacre on St. Bartholomew's day. Give the same priests the same power, and nothing will be wanting *but latinity for the oration.*" At nearly the time when these chapters were written, Landor had been corresponding about one of his Llanthony livings with the bishop of St. David's, for whose character and learning he had high respect; and he has some excellent remarks on the inadequacy of the payment of curates, which were probably suggested by that correspondence. His conclusion upon the whole matter is to counsel moderation on all sides; and this he enforces in language not undeserving of respect, though little likely to have hearing as matters stand at present. "It would grieve me to foresee a day when our cathedrals and our churches shall be demolished or desecrated; when the tones of the organ, when the symphonies of Handel, shall no longer swell and reverberate along the groined roof and painted windows. But let old superstitions crumble into dust; let faith, hope, and charity be simple in their attire; let few and solemn words be spoken before Him to whom all hearts are open, all desires known. Principalities and powers belong not to the service of the Crucified, and religion can never be pure, never of good report, among those who usurp or covet them!"

A similar set of letters or chapters, written two years afterwards in the assumed character of an American, and dedicated with much admiration to Mr. Gladstone, had for their subject the outset of the Crimean War, which was sharply criticised. These were issued separately: but, collected in the same volume with those on Popery, were others calling attention to Southey's services in connection with



the neglect of his family ; and of these last the sequel may be worth relating.

They had been published in a paper I had long been connected with, and at that time conducted ; not better known for its liberal opinions, than for the incomparable wit and ability which the friend whom I followed as its editor had associated with its name. Nor had only the letters been given. Comments had been made on the subject of them from time to time ; and I had very strongly directed attention to the fact, that though a Tory administration was in power when Southey died and until three years after his death, his son was still suffered to languish on less than a hundred a year, in the church of whose interests his father had been so zealous a champion. This was a duty that should hardly have been left to a journal differing so strongly from many of Southey's views ; but it was nothing to what occurred a little later, when (if small things may be compared to great), with astonishment only equalled by Sydney Smith's at finding himself, an old Edinburgh reviewer, defending the church against archbishops and bishops, I found myself — the editor of a paper of what was then called extreme liberal opinions — defending Southey against the *Quarterly Review*. At this very time, however, in January, 1851, unexpected help came from another quarter. The Whig chancellor, Lord Truro, resolved that Southey's son should have a chancery living ; and as his interest in the case had been awakened by a newspaper, he made its editor, throughout, the channel of his kindness. Not disdaining to seek information where great officials are apt to turn away in fright lest they should find it, he applied privately for such suggestion as I could give on the subject that had attracted his notice : having thus satisfied himself that the living would be worthily bestowed, he made me the means of conveying it ; and at the close of the month I handed over to Mr. Cuthbert Southey the presentation under the great seal to a rectory of the value of upwards of three hundred a year, besides house and glebe. Even the fees had been paid by Lord Truro. The transaction altogether, I need hardly add, was a wonderful surprise as well as pleasure to Landor.

The most important of the poetical pieces in the volume I am now noticing were five dramatic scenes on a subject familiarized already to poetical readers by a very great genius. Landor had been much moved by the story of Beatrice Cenci, thinking it indeed the most deeply pathetic of any in the annals of the world. "When I was at Rome," he wrote to me in 1850, "I visited frequently Lady Mary Deerhurst, afterwards Lady Coventry ; and yet more frequently I forgot the object of my visit to palazzo Barberini, and turned impulsively to the room containing the portrait of Beatrice. Nothing else could fix my attention : my heart rose violently with more than one emotion. Shelley has shown great delicacy in overshadowing the incest, but the violent language he gives to Beatrice somewhat lowers her. Alas, alas, poor Cenci ! she never told her grief. Of this I am

certain. In her heart was the same heroism as that of Prometheus : no torture could extort the dreadful secret : she would have died without disclosing it. I had once an inclination myself to write a few scenes of this sad and sacred drama."

Not only his inclination is expressed here, but the manner in which he intended to treat his theme ; and very soon he was at work upon it. At first the scenes were not to be in verse, but the passion and imagination of a subject of this kind easily overflow the low banks of prose. The first three scenes show Cenci's character at home, and the last two exhibit his daughter's sufferings and death. Of Italian character, in its highest and lowest grades, a very singular and intimate knowledge is displayed ; and there is marvellous skill in revealing just enough, and only enough, to render a horrible story intelligible : but what is said by himself of the scenes is otherwise perfectly true, that "they interfere very little with Shelley's noble tragedy." When first sent to me they were inscribed to the memory of Beddoes, a man who wasted on wild and impracticable subjects a genius only second to the highest in tragic poetry. "In laying these scattered lines of mine," Landor wrote, "on the recently closed grave of Beddoes, *fungar inani munere* ; but it is, if not a merit, at least a somewhat of self-satisfaction, to be among the earliest, if among the humblest, in my oblation. Nearly two centuries have elapsed since a work of the same wealth of genius as *Death's Jest-Book* hath been given to the world." This he replaced afterwards by a dedication to Miss Lynn, a lady for whose character and attainments he had an extreme admiration, whose books gave him high pleasure and enjoyment of the most unaffected kind, and from whose visits and correspondence he derived not a small portion of his happiness in these later years.

Of the other poems included in *Last Fruit*, or in the two later issues of *Dry Sticks* and *Hellenics Enlarged*, those that alone require present allusion from me are such as had any personal significance or interest. Some had formerly been printed in less perfect shape ; a much larger number should never have been printed at all ; a few, upon grave subjects, had his old exquisite grace of diction ; and another few, even upon subjects almost too trivial to put into verse, were so good as to take rank with the best things of that sort to be found in books before book-making was. They are of what may be called the old style, in which he printed his first imitation of the manner of his favorite Latin poet.

"Aurelius, sire of Hungrinesses !  
Thee thy old friend Catullus blesses,  
And sends thee six fine watercresses.

"There are who would not think me quite  
(Unless we were old friends) polite  
To mention whom you should invite.

"Look at them well ; and turn it o'er  
In your own mind . . . I'd have but four . . .  
Lucullus, Cæsar, and two more."



Something of that style we may also discover in these little following pieces, where he sketches the popular Matho; where he gives a hint to his own critics; where he opens the world's theatre to us, at its three principal performances; or where he rebukes our good Kenyon for deserting his cottage at Wimbledon.

"Deep forests hide the stoutest oaks;  
Hazels make sticks for market-folks;  
He who comes soon to his estate  
Dies poor; the rich heir is the late.  
Sere ivy shaded Shakespeare's brow;  
But Matho is a poet now."

---

"Wearers of rings and chains!  
Pray do not take the pains  
To set me right.  
In vain my faults ye quote;  
I write as others wrote  
On Sunium's height."

---

"Alas, how soon the hours are over  
Counted us out to play the lover!  
And how much narrower is the stage  
Allotted us to play the sage!  
But when we play the fool, how wide  
The theatre expands! beside  
How long the audience sits before us!  
How many prompters! what a chorus!"

---

"Wimbledon has all charms for me!  
Per Bacco, I would rather see,  
Than all the crowds that crowd the gate  
Before the greatest of the great,  
The gander and the goose upon  
Your little mere at Wimbledon."

Nor is it absent from such graver moods as I may illustrate by four other poems of equal brevity, in which, though with also equal simplicity and directness of expression, there is a tone half soothing in the sadness, and a coloring as of autumn sunsets, rather soft and rich than sorrowful or mournful.

"How calm, O life, is thy decline!  
Ah, it is only when the sun  
His hot and headstrong course hath run,  
Heaven's guiding stars serenely shine!"

---

"False are our dreams, or there are fields below  
To which the weariest feet the swiftest go;  
And there are bitter streams the wretched bless,  
Before whose thirst they lose their bitterness.  
'T is hard to love! to unlove harder yet!  
Not so to die — and then, perhaps, forget."

---

"The place where soon I think to lie  
In its old creviced nook hard by  
Rears many a weed:  
If parties bring you there, will you  
Drop slyly in a grain or two  
Of wallflower seed?"

"I shall not see it, and (too sure!)  
I shall not ever hear that your  
Light step was there;  
But the rich odor some fine day  
Will, what I cannot do, repay  
That little care."

"The grateful heart for all things blesses  
Not only joy, but grief endears:  
I love you for your few caresses,  
I love you for my many tears."

That last is very perfect. Nor less beautiful in its tenderness and delicacy, as well as very affecting for other reasons, is one of his many recollections of his earliest friend, his sister Elizabeth. Old age ever links to the present the most distant past; and here is the school-room not seen for nearly eighty years, overshadowed by the still unchanged cedar seen only yesterday. Here, too, are the works of charity and mercy that died with her, and his favorite plant that also withered when her loving care was withdrawn.\*

"Is there a day or night  
One when the vision of my earliest friend,  
Robed in her own pure light,  
Fails on my weary vigils to descend?"

"Sometimes she may appear  
Before the expectant school-room when the chimes  
Sing blithely '*dinner near*';  
And, in a darker sadder scene sometimes,

"The lonely widow's door  
Knows by long use what step is on the sill;  
It opens, as before  
Year after year! Pain flies, and moans are still.

"And then to walks at home  
From age's griefs and childhood's games we pass,  
Where, gloom o'erhanging gloom,  
The stern old cedar waves away the grass.

"Thou, too, my cistus, thou  
Whose one-day flowers in my best books lie spread,  
Deserted long ere now,  
With none to prop thee, side by side, art dead."

Another only I may give of the very many that memories of her had suggested after her death: on some of the trees in the old Warwick garden.

"Cypress and Cedar! gracefulest of trees,  
Friends of my boyhood! ye before the breeze,  
As lofty lords before an eastern throne,  
Bend the whole body, not the head alone."

Among these fruits too, the produce of old age thus gathered, there is not wanting, at times, an austerer flavor; and there was as yet no weakness in his voice when he uplifted it against tyranny or wrong. There are few of his lines on Kossuth that have not the ring of the

\* See *ante*, p. 574.



true metal. As in the descriptive touch of his passage of the desert after the Sultan had unlocked the gates for him.

"Him when the sons of Ismael saw,  
The man who gave free men the law,  
They stopt the camel-train to gaze:  
For in the desert they had heard  
The miracles of Kossuth's word,  
The myriad voices of his praise."

Or where he thanks the Turk for having done that fearless deed of justice and humanity.

"In vain two proud usurpers side by side,  
Meschid! would shake thy throne:  
Sit firm; these outlaws of the world deride,  
And fear thy God alone.

"The Merciful and Mighty, Wise and Just,  
Who lays the proud man low,  
Who raises up the fallen from the dust,  
And bids the captive go."

Belonging also to these latest years are several critical poems; and from one of them descriptive of contemporary poets, written in hexameters at the request of Hare, who had a strange liking for such ungainly intruders upon a language entirely unsuited to them, I take some lines on Wordsworth confirmatory of what was lately said as to Landor's final belief in regard to him.\*

"Wordsworth, well pleased with himself, cared little for modern or ancient,  
His was the moor and the tarn, the recess in the mountain, the woodland  
Scattered with trees far and wide, trees never too solemn or lofty,  
Never entangled with plants overrunning the villager's footpath.  
Equable was he and plain; and though wandering a little in wisdom  
Ever was English at heart. If his words were too many; if Fancy's  
Furniture lookt rather scant in a whitewashed and homely apartment;  
If in his rural designs there is sameness and tameness; if often  
Feebleness is there for breadth; if his pencil wants rounding and pointing;  
Few of this age or the last stand out on the like elevation.  
There is a sheepfold he raised which my memory loves to revisit,  
Sheepfold whose wall shall endure when there is not a stone of the palace."

Another poem in the collection was addressed to his brother Robert, and is not now to be named without sorrowful addition. Both Landor's surviving brothers were living in the autumn of 1865, when this biography was begun; and at this Easter of 1869, when it approaches to its tardy completion, both are passed away. Henry died three years ago; and it is little more than three weeks since I stood at the grave which closed over Robert, the last of this family of remarkable men.† Without him the book could not have been written; he took a natural interest in what he had helped so much; and but for him I should hardly have persisted with it against many difficulties. To his writings, and to the extraordinary likeness be-

\* *Ante*, p. 567.

† Charles Landor was in his seventy-third year, when he died of an illness rendered serious only by his too great confidence in his strength. Henry survived to his eighty-seventh year, Robert to his eighty-eighth, and Walter to his ninetieth.

tween his genius and his brother's, many references have been made in the course of it; and what I may now permit myself to say of his character will be said least obtrusively in connection with this poem. One allusion in it, which had given him pain, I shall transcribe with his own marginal comment upon it, sent me at the time.

"Thine is the care to keep our native springs  
Pure of pollution, clear of weeds; but thine  
Are also graver cares, with fortune blest  
Not above competence, with duties charged  
Which with more zeal and prudence none perform.  
There are who guide the erring, tend the sick,  
Nor frown the starving from a half-closed door;  
But none beside my brother, none beside,  
In stall thick littered or on mitred throne,  
Gives the more needy all the Church gives him.  
Unaided, though years press and health declines,  
By aught of clerical or human aid,  
Thou servest God, and God's poor guests, alone."

"Few things of little consequence have ever given me so much mortification as this praise; the more painful because it was kindly intended. Neither my brother, nor any other person, ever heard me say what I had given to the poor. If I had given only 'all the Church gives me,' they would not have received, in sixty years, so much as sixpence. I never received a farthing from the Church in my life. The income arising from my living, which is less than the income arising from the £6,000 my mother had previously given me to purchase it with, does not pay my curate and other such expenses. I lose £200 a year by being a clergyman. I am that much poorer than I should have been as a layman, after bringing my own private property into the Church; and what little I can spare for charity is from my other personal resources. It is not an uncommon case. The vicar of a parish adjoining mine, equally unaided, has spent £800 in building one church, and £500 in restoring another. But how could my brother have learnt my virtues but from me? and how can I escape the contempt which such boasting must provoke? I would rather be thought deserving of a halter for my rapacity than of commendations for charity claimed by myself."

What is implied in this remonstrance (addressed also at the time to his brother in almost the same words), not of independence, conscientiousness, and the sense of justice only, but of their never-failing accompaniment of self-denial, attended Mr. Landor through every part of his long life. At its outset, when an income placing him above want had been secured to him, he resigned his fellowship at Oxford because he believed such endowments to have been intended only for gentlemen or scholars who had no other sufficient means. At its close, and the close of his ministry in an establishment which had withheld from him all her worldly rewards, and for sixty years had accepted his labor unpaid even by laborers' hire, his only desire was, by such bequests as he could make on his death, to improve the Church of his vicarage for its next successor. For all the forty years while incumbent of Birlingham, he was never, for a single Sunday, absent from his parish, nor, until he had passed his eightieth year, absent



even from his pulpit.\* Yet, by the mere character of his accomplishments, to speak of nothing higher, society must have had for him all the charms which it rarely fails to yield to one fitted to shine in it. He had travelled in early life, had taken part in many public discussions as a writer in journals and reviews, was a really brilliant talker up to the year but one before he died, and had an amount as well as variety of knowledge of a quite uncommon kind. Nor was there anything he knew that he had not ready for use; and I remember how much he surprised me, in the last conversation I had with him, by his homely social pictures and illustrations of a period beyond all others least authentically known to us, which he had drawn, besides graver matters of higher importance, from the writings of the Fathers. He had the quick gray eyes of his brother Walter; with wonderful resemblance to him in his voice, in a laugh as frequent and genial though less loud and prolonged, in modes of expressing himself, even in turns and tones of Warwickshire speech which we may fancy Shakespeare himself to have had; but he was much taller, and had more refined and handsome features. Altogether he was a man, this quiet rector of a sequestered country parish, who by natural gifts as well as great acquirements might have been expected to make a figure in the world; but there was a wisdom also possessed by him which explains the life he preferred to live.

It was impossible for any man to be more sensitive on points of honor, but he had obligations to faith and duty higher than even this, and one allegiance which was always supreme. The object of one of his tragedies was to show, how, by a Christian, dishonor itself might be borne; and to him was expressed, in that, all human trial. Truth in the very smallest things he thought of equal importance as in the very greatest: and when another of his tragedies was obtaining unexpected success by having been ascribed to Lord Byron,† he insisted on being announced as its writer; just as, when his *Fawn of Sertorius* was universally ascribed to his brother, he at once had the error publicly corrected. He would have rejected with as infinite scorn any advantage to be purchased by silence as any gain to be got by a

\* I take some lines from a pleasing notice in a local paper (*Worcester Journal*, 13th February, 1869), written by a gentleman who was for some time Mr. Landor's curate at Birlingham. "Every individual in his parish had been christened or married by him, or came in some special manner under his cognizance. . . . He received the appointment of Chaplain to the Prince Regent . . . but he preferred to spend in the unobtrusive duties of a country clergyman his long unmarried life and his considerable private property. . . . His one indulgence was the collecting of pictures by the old masters. . . . His standard of clerical duty was not a low or self-indulgent one. He was in the practice of reading through the Bible in the Greek version every year; and on Christmas day and Good Friday, after full morning service and communion, he made a point of visiting and administering the sacrament to every sick or infirm person in his parish. It will be no matter of surprise, that though a few families in the place (one of them having position and wealth) were Dissenters, no chapel was ever built in it, no rivalry or opposition known. The rector's wishes were his people's law." As I stood at his grave I saw few eyes that seemed dry among the entire parish of very old and very young, the poor and the well-to-do, who crowded around; and it had been the care of the great lady of the place to put all the children of his schools in mourning.

† *Ante*, pp. 535-537.

lie. He would rest in nothing that he did not think to be true; and it was the impregnability of his belief in the religion whose minister he was, that very early had made distasteful to him that kind of worldly success which he had seen for the most part to consist in adhering to the forms and giving up the substance as well as guidance of Christianity. The drift of his noble romance of the *Fountain of Arethusa* is a comparison of the results of revelation in the modern world with those of reason in the ancient; and the end is to show that if the moral and religious institutions of men have become happier through divine illumination, so much the more feeble would seem to have become their ability to appreciate the benefit and profit by its splendor. The old world and the new are brought face to face; and the ancients, exerting the reason which was their unassisted guide, bring the moderns to the test of the Christianity they profess, to find their conduct in unceasing contradiction to their faith. Of the wit and philosophy with which that fine fancy is worked out, or of the splendor of imagination with which his tale of Sertorius is told in all its beauty, mystery, and tragedy, this is not the place to speak. But posterity will find these books, if it has time to attend to anything done in our day; in its gallery will be a place for both the brothers; and not far from the plinth that bears Walter Landor's name, will be that which is inscribed with the name of ROBERT EYRES LANDOR.

We met them in the street and gave not way;  
When they were gone we lifted up both hands,  
And said to neighbors, *These were men indeed!*

Those lines, which are from *Scenes for a Study*, recall me to that work. It was the last of the poetical fruits, gathered on the eve of quitting England forever, of which it was to be said (this being, as certainly, *not* applicable to all) that they had in them the true relish of the Hesperides gardens. "I will hope," Landor wrote to me in December, 1855, "to send you on my birthday, when I shall enter on my eighty-second year, some scenes for the study. I write one day and correct the next, and some days do a little of both. The Muses, we hear, are the daughters of Memory. In the nature and course of things, the mother should go first. With me it is so. But I doubt whether you will find the young ladies looking so fresh and active as they should do." The doubt was not justified. Rarely had anything better been done by this extraordinary old man than these dozen scenes in which he had told again the ancient story of the two gamblers in ambition and love who threw between them for the stake of the world. The place (excepting only of the last dialogue) is Egypt; the time, that of the victory of Actium; the principal incidents, the deaths of Antony and of Cleopatra, the murder of Cæsarion, son to Cleopatra and Julius Cæsar, and the capture of Lucius and Marcus, children of Cleopatra and Antony; and the leading peculiarity of the whole, great force and distinctness of character.



The two triumvirs, victorious and vanquished, are as finely contrasted as their fortunes. The one, in his success, waiting and far-seeing, but crafty, selfish, and coldly and calmly treacherous ; the other rougher in his adversity, with louder laugh and less tolerant speech, become less patient and more reckless, but largely generous and trustful still as well as proud and bold, Roman soldier and lover to the last. Octavius has a false friend in Dolabella, who unsuccessfully tries to undermine him ; and Antony has a loyal adversary in Agrippa, the conqueror at Actium, who vainly tries to serve him : the one meant to be as typical of the new empire that is coming, as the other of the old republic that is gone. But this is done without strain. We are only conscious of it as of the contrasting influences of Egypt and of Rome, which are all the more strongly felt as the art of them is never obtruded. Rome herself seems dwarfed, with her turbulent victories and deities, in the huge silent presence of those

“Mild Gods both arms upon their knees”;

and there is a very fine effect in the scene where the death of Antony is announced, and Octavius is at the summit of his triumph, when, from the poet who is his friend and fellow-captain, Cornelius Gallus, there falls upon him unexpectedly, like a cold blast from a sepulchre, elegiac verses on the mighty of the earth, to tell him they are only earth, and that death claims earth for its heritage. Not all I have thus described however is what most of all deserves remembrance in these fine Scenes. Undoubtedly their masterpiece is the character and death of Cæsarion. Everything beyond even poetic warrant in making this boy and mother so young\* is to be freely forgiven for the extraordinary beauty it imparts to the sketch. The lad has never left the side of Cleopatra and her women, but nevertheless he is the son of Julius ; and his manly, almost martial confidence, displayed with all the feminine enjoyment of a nature which is nothing without something it can trust to and love, has an enchanting effect. Cleopatra herself has such belief in it, and is so confident that in the presence of Romans the son of Cæsar will be safe ; nay, she has such faith in his power, protected by his father's name, also to save even the sons of Antony ; that she trusts him into his cousin's camp. This of course is fatal to Cæsarion ; but the opportunity

\* I remonstrated with Landor on this point; and here was his reply: “I don't think the point so certain as you appear to think it is. There were differences between Cleopatra and her brother at the time when Julius Cæsar went into Egypt; and he settled them on his arrival. She was carried up into his bedroom on a man's shoulders in a coverlet. She and her brother were minors, under tutelage. Eastern kings and queens are not minors after twelve. At twelve girls are marriageable. I doubt if Cleopatra was much above *thirteen* when Cæsarion was born; certainly not *fourteen*. Now, it is easy to know at what time Antony came into Egypt, and when he died.” Unfortunately it is the very ease with which dates may be computed that overturns altogether Landor's theory. She was, I fear, as certainly born B. C. 69 as the battle of Actium was fought B. C. 30. The story of the coverlet is no more than a tradition preserved by Plutarch of the way in which she got herself carried into the chamber of Cæsar, whom she was bent on fascinating to her will, in the form of a bale of goods.

for the poet is a fine one, and the scene where the boy, betrayed and murdered, yet trusts and loves to the last the man who murders him, is as pathetic as anything ever written by Landor.

To this account, that the reader may to some extent judge whether the power to sustain so masterly a conception had been weakened by the strain of the poet's eighty-two years, I will add some illustrations from the Scenes themselves, now not easily obtainable by any one.

#### I. CLEOPATRA CONSENTS TO DIE WITH ANTONY.

*Antony.* Generous, pious girl!  
Daughter of Ptolemies! thou hast not won  
A lower man than they. Thy name shall rise  
Above the pyramids, above the stars;  
Nations yet wild shall that name civilize,  
And glorious poets shake their theatres  
And stagger kings and emperors with applause.  
*Cleopatra.* I was not born to die; but I was born  
To leave the world with Antony, and will.  
*Antony.* The greatest of all eastern kings died thus,  
The greater than all eastern kings thus died.

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#### II. MECÆNAS ADVISES OCTAVIUS.

*Mecænas.* All may be won, well handled; but the ear  
Is not the thing to hold by. Show men gold,  
Entangle them in Gallic turquoises,  
Tie stubborn necks with ropes of blushing pearls,  
Seat them on ivory from the realms of Ind,  
Augur them consulates, pro-consulates,  
Make their eyes widen into provinces,  
And, gleaming farther onward, tetrarchies.  
*Octavius.* It strikes me now that we may offer Gallus  
The prefecture of Egypt.  
*Mecænas.* Some time hence;  
Better consult Agrippa.  
*Octavius.* None more trusty.  
Yet our Agrippa hath strange whims; he dotes  
Upon old Rome, the Rome of matted beards  
And of curt tunics; of old Rome's old laws  
Worm-eaten long . . .

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#### III. A LOVER OF HIMSELF.

*Octavius.* I do not think, my Cilnius, thou hast felt  
Love but for me; I never knew thee hate.  
*Mecænas.* It is too troublesome, it rumples sleep,  
It settles on the dishes of the feast,  
It bites the fruit, it dips into the wine;  
I'd rather let my enemy hate *me*  
Than I hate him.

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#### IV. WHAT THE ROME OF AUGUSTUS IS TO BE.

*Octavius.* I wish ~~this~~ country settled, us returned.  
Resolved am I to do what none hath done,  
And only Julius ever purposed doing;  
Resolved to render Rome, beneath my rule,  
A second Alexandria. Corinth, Carthage,



One autumn saw in stubble; not a wreath  
 Enough to crown a capital was left,  
 Nor capital to crown its pillar, none;  
 But here behold what glorious edifices!  
 What palaces! what temples! what august  
 Kings! how unmoved is every countenance  
 Above the crowd! And so it was in life.  
 No other city in the world, from west  
 To east, seems built for rich and poor alike.  
 In Athens, Antioch, Miletus, Rhodes,  
 The richest Roman could not shelter him  
 Against the dog-star; here the poorest slave  
 Finds refuge under granite, here he sleeps  
 Noiseless, and when he wakens, dips his hand  
 Into the treasured waters of the Nile.

*Mecænas.* I wish, Octavius, thou wouldst carry hence  
 For thy own worship one of those mild Gods  
 Both arms upon the knees: 't is time that all  
 Should imitate this posture.

V. A POET-SOLDIER'S PREFERENCES.

*Octavius (to a Guard).* Call Gallus hither.

*Gallus.* Cæsar! what commands?

*Octavius.* I would intrust a legion, more than one,  
 To our friend Gallus: I would fix him here  
 In Egypt: none is abler to coerce  
 The turbulent.

*Gallus.* Let others flap their limbs  
 With lotus-leaves when Sirius flames above;  
 Give me the banks of Anio, where young Spring,  
 Who knows not half the names of her own flowers,  
 Looks into Summer's eyes and wakes him up  
 Alert, and laughs at him until he lifts  
 His rod of roses, and she runs away.

*Octavius.* And has that lovely queen no charms for thee?

*Gallus.* If truth be spoken of her, and it may,  
 Since she is powerless and deserted now,  
 Though more than thrice seven years have come and stolen  
 Day after day a leaf or two of bloom,  
 She has but changed her beauty; the soft tears  
 Fall, one would think, to make it spring afresh.

VI. DOLABELLA COUNSELS ANTONY TO SURRENDER CÆSARION.

*Dolabella.* Create a generosity of soul  
 In one whom conquest now hath made secure;  
 Bid him put forth his power, it now is greater  
 Than any man's: consider what a friend  
 Cæsarion hath in Julius, all whose wounds  
 Will bleed afresh before the assembled tribes  
 On the imperial robe thy hands outspread  
 With its wide rents, for every God above  
 And every Roman upon earth to number.

*Antony.* Ah! those were days worth living o'er again.

My Cleopatra! never will we part;  
 Thy son shall reign in Egypt.

*Dolabella.* Much I feared,

O Antony, thy rancor might prevail  
 Against thy prudence. Cæsar bears no rancor.

*Antony.* Too little is that heart for honest hatred.  
 The serpent the most venomous hath just  
 Enough of venom for one deadly wound;  
 He strikes but once, and then he glides away.

## VII. ANTONY SPEAKS OF HIS FRIENDS TO AGRIPPA.

*Antony.* But many yet are left me, brave and true.  
*Agrippa.* When Fortune hath deserted us, too late  
 Comes Valor, standing us in little stead.  
 They who would die for us are just the men  
 We should not push on death or throw away.  
*Antony.* Too true! Octavius with his golden wand  
 Hath reacht from far some who defied his sword . . .  
 I have too long stood balancing the world  
 Not to know well its weight: of that frail crust  
 Friends are the lightest atoms.  
*Agrippa.* Not so all.  
*Antony.* I thought of Dolabella and the rest.

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## VIII. ANTONY'S LAST REQUEST TO AGRIPPA.

*Agrippa.* Thy gladness gladdens me,  
 Bursting so suddenly. What happy change!  
*Antony.* Thou hast a little daughter, my old friend,  
 And I two little sons — I had at least —  
 Give her the better and the braver one,  
 When by thy care he comes to riper age.  
*Agrippa.* O Antony! the changes of our earth  
 Are sudden and oftener than the moon's;  
 On hers we calculate, not so on ours,  
 But leave them in the hands of wilful Gods,  
 Inflexible, yet sometimes not malign.  
*Antony.* They have done much for me, nor shall reproach  
 Against them pass my lips: I might have asked,  
 But never thought of asking, what desert  
 Was mine for half the blessings they bestowed.  
 I will not question them why they have cast  
 My greatness and my happiness so low:  
 They have not taken from me their best gift,  
 A heart forever open to my friends.

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## IX. CÆSARION.

*Octavius.* Agrippa, didst thou mark that comely boy?  
*Agrippa.* I did indeed.  
*Octavius.* There is, methinks, in him  
 A somewhat not unlike our common friend.  
*Agrippa.* Unlike? There never was such similar  
 Expression. I remember Caius Julius  
 In youth, although my elder by some years;  
 Well I remember that high-vaulted brow,  
 Those eyes of eagle under it, those lips  
 At which the Senate and the people stood  
 Expectant for their portals to unclose;  
 Then speech, not womanly but manly sweet,  
 Came from them, and shed pleasure as the morn  
 Sheds light.  
*Octavius.* The boy has too much confidence.  
*Agrippa.* Not for his prototype. When he threw back  
 That hair, in hue like cinnamon, I thought  
 I saw great Julius tossing his . . .

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## X. AGRIPPA PLEADS TO MECÆNAS FOR CÆSARION.

*Agrippa.* My gentle Cilnius,  
 Do save this lad! Octavius is so calm,  
 I doubt he hath some evil in his breast



Against the only scion of the house,  
The orphan child of Julius.

*Mecænas.*

Think, Agrippa,

If there be safety where such scion is,  
Safety for you and me.

*Agrippa.*

The mother must  
Adorn the triumph; but that boy would push  
Rome, universal Rome, against the steeds  
That should in ignominy bear along  
The image of her Julius. Think; when Antony  
Showed but his vesture, sprang there not tears, swords,  
Curses? and swept they not before them all  
Who shared the parricide? If such result  
Sprang from torn garment, what must from the sight  
Of that fresh image which calls back again  
The latest of the gods, and not the least,  
Who nurtured every child within those walls,  
And emptied into every mother's lap  
Africa, Sicily, Sardinia, Gaul,  
And this inheritance of mighty kings.  
No such disgrace must fall on Cæsar's son.  
Spare but the boy, and we are friends forever.

XI.

OCTAVIA INTERCEDES FOR ANTONY'S CHILDREN.

*Octavius.*

Are children always children?

*Octavia.*

O brother! brother! are men always men?  
They are full-grown then only when grown up  
Above their fears. Rome never yet stood safe;  
Compass it round with friends and kindnesses,  
And not with moats of blood. Remember Thebes:  
The towers of Cadmus toppled, split asunder  
Crasht: in the shadow of her oleanders  
The pure and placid Dirce still flows by.  
What shattered to its base but cruelty  
(Mother of crimes, all lesser than herself)  
The house of Agamemnon, king of kings?  
Thou art not yet, Octavia, an old woman;  
Tell not, I do beseech thee, such old tales.  
Hear later; hear what our own parents saw.  
Where lies the seed of Sulla? Could the walls  
Of his Præneste shelter the young Marius,  
Or subterranean passages provide  
Escape? he stumbled through the gore his father  
Had left in swamps on our Italian plains.  
We have been taught these histories together,  
Neither untrue nor profitless; few years  
Have since gone by, can memory too have gone?  
Ay, smile, Octavius! only let the smile  
Be somewhat less disdainful.

*Octavius.*

'T is unwise

*Octavia.*

To plant thy foot where Fortune's wheel runs on.  
I lack not wisdom utterly: my soul  
Assures me wisdom is humanity;  
And they who want it, wise as they may seem,  
And confident in their own sight and strength,  
Reach not the scope they aim at.

Worst of war

Is war of passion; best of peace is peace  
Of mind, reposing on the watchful care  
Daily and nightly of the household Gods.

These Scenes were in my hands three weeks before the day he had  
promised them to me, and were indeed published on that very day

(30th January, 1856); in a tract exactly resembling, as to size and price, that in which *Gebir* had appeared nearly sixty years before. That such attributes and powers of mind should so long have retained their freshness, that their unceasing exercise over so wide a space of time should have left them neither weakened nor strained, and that at its close this most delicate of all intellectual fruit should exhibit nothing of the chill of more than fourscore winters, may hereafter be accounted one of the marvels of literature. Nor did it pass without notice at the time; not publicly, for the *Scenes* had small acceptance from the critics, but in quarters from which praise was more grateful. "What an undaunted soul before his eighty years," Mrs. Browning wrote to me (March, 1856), after infinite praise of the *Scenes*, "and how good for all other souls to contemplate! It is better than any treatise on immortality!" "What a wonderful Landor he is," was written by another hand in the same letter. "The eye is not dim, nor the natural force abated. That is to live one's eighty years indeed. I wish, if you have a way, you would express our veneration for what he is, has been, and we trust long will be." Not that any undue confidence in this undimmed intellect ever blinded Landor to the sense of how near he stood to the inevitable presence; in these *Scenes* very frequently, and scattered over all his last fruit, is the lesson, not unwisely at any time enforced, of the tranquillity with which the rest of death may be waited for; he was ever ready to contemplate calmly in his own case what arises to the thought of Antony,

I have been sitting longer at life's feast  
Than does me good; I will arise and go:

and for that especially Mr. Carlyle at this time thanked him. "You look into the eyes of Death withal, as the brave all do habitually from an early period of their course; and certainly one's heart answers to you. Yea, valiant brother, yea, even so! There is a tone as of the old Roman in these things which does me good, and is very sad to me, and very noble."

Little more remains to be said of Landor's last literary labors in England. The old tree was to go on shedding fruit as long as there was life in trunk or bough, and the last was never to mean anything more than the latest. Of those under immediate notice the latest was the enlargement of his *Hellenics*; several new ones being added, and several of the old ones rewritten; but enough will have been said of it if I add that it had been especially his study, with advancing years, to give more and more of a severe and simple character to all his writing after the antique, and that this was exclusively the object, here, of the most part of his changes or additions. For this reason they deserve close attention. It was an old sagacious warning to a young writer, that if he should happen to observe in his writing at any time what appeared to him to be particularly fine, he would do well to strike it out; and, in revising those pieces on classical



subjects, Landor was following the advice as implicitly after he had passed his eightieth year as if he had not reached his eighteenth. I remember a close he had put to the exquisite *Paris and Enone* which I thought extremely striking. But no, he said ; it ended the poem too much in a flash, which we below were fond of, but which those on the heights of antiquity, both in poetry and prose, avoided. And of course he was right.

The incidents that led to his final departure from England are now briefly to be named. But as in these latter years, when he had ceased to visit much, he had been deriving no inconsiderable enjoyment as well from the reading as from the writing of books, some notices of that kind of use of his leisure may have also some interest for the reader, and will here be properly interposed.

### XIII. SILENT COMPANIONS.

All the recent years, as they passed, had found my old friend content with his few associates in Bath, and more and more indisposed to other society. He made exception only for that of his books, and here it became my privilege still to have part. There was rarely a week in which he did not write to me of some book as of a friend he had been talking with ; and often so characteristically, that any account of this portion of his life would be incomplete which did not borrow illustration from these letters. Dialogues not imaginary I may call them, with but one listener until now ; and the reader will have to judge if they were worthy of a larger audience. I will take a few of the subjects that thus occurred in our correspondence, some touched briefly, some at large ; and in the order or connection, or absence of both, just as I received them.

To the first I shall name he had been attracted, by remembering that when Southey visited him at Como, in 1816, he mentioned Blanco White with much affection as the most interesting character he had left behind him in England. "But he never mentioned him as the best dialectician and the most dispassionate reasoner. He rated less highly than I now perceive to be his due both his abilities and the beauty of his language. I had always thought Whately his superior ; but I am converted to the side of Blanco, who unites the graces of poetry and the refinements of criticism, and superadds to both a passionate love of truth. He is indeed the very opposite of a character on which he discourses in one of the volumes ; a man so fond of lying that he lies to himself, as men sing to themselves who are fond of singing." The volumes were the *Life and Letters of Blanco White*, and the more he read in them the higher his opinion became. They opened a California to him, he said, "all gold below, and all salubrity above." This admiration did not surprise me. The book has always seemed to me to hold a high place among the few in our language of a biographical kind that have a purely and keenly

intellectual interest ; and Blanco himself was so uncommon a man, though the name is unfamiliar now, that the reader may thank me for prefacing what Landor has to say by a few words of my own.

It is nearly thirty years since Blanco White died, and for thirty years before that time there were few names better known than his in the society of London and Oxford. He was a Spaniard, born in the same year as Landor ; his father of an Irish stock, settled in Seville, then the most bigoted town in Spain ; and his mother an Andalusian so ardent for her church, that she dragged her son from his father's counting-house to turn him into an ecclesiastic. The career unhappily proved to be so conflicting with the character of his mind, that by the time he obtained rank as a priest, its unfavorable influences affected him with such keenness as to render flight his only escape from infidelity. He came to England in 1810, then so imperfectly acquainted with English that he had to support himself in London by setting up a Spanish newspaper ; which he did by the kindness of Lord Holland. He rendered in this way much public service, up to the expulsion of the French from Spain in 1814 ; became gradually meanwhile a master of our language ; lived very familiarly in Holland House for a part of the time ; and settled ultimately at Oxford, where he was no mean figure among even the extraordinary group of men who then met in the common room of Oriel. He received from the University a mastership of arts, and was led to take English orders. These were his not least happy years. He corresponded with Southey and Coleridge, explained the Roman Catholic Breviary to Pusey and Hurrell Froude, and delighted equally in Newman and Whately. But, tempted into controversy with members of his former communion, he threw himself over-zealously into the strife, and shocked Lord Holland not a little by declaring in the *Quarterly* against Catholic emancipation. Soon, however, the larger liberality of his nature reasserted itself, and, upon the schism that made broad division in Oriel, stood fast by Whately. He accompanied his friend to Dublin ; was unhappily not strengthened in his new belief by what he saw of the Irish Establishment ; and, shaken by his own doubts at the very time when he was hoping to settle the wavering faith of a Unitarian, became Unitarian himself. His sincerity no one could doubt. He proved it by the most painful sacrifices ; nay, by what is entitled to be called even heroism, touching and noble. The real truth was that his ardent, impulsive nature had never actually recovered the shock of its recoil from the Jesuit discipline. What followed, in successive stages, was compromise ; and compromises only last for a time. He did not remain in Unitarianism. But to the very last he seems to me, in a certain construction of his mind, in its close union of the moral with the intellectual faculties, even in some of its weaknesses, but above all in its restless desire for truth, a nonconformist Doctor Arnold. Perhaps however he will be remembered longest for the



extraordinary intellectual achievement of having so mastered our language, some time after he had passed middle life, as to have made it thoroughly his own. He literally recast his mind in an English mould; after a few years never thought but in English; wrote an admirable English style, strong and simple; and is the author of an English sonnet called "Night and Death," of surpassing beauty of expression, and subtlety as well as grandeur of thought.

What first enchanted Landor, apart from the spiritual insight of this man or the force of reasoning and conviction in him, was the discovery in every part of his mind of sensitiveness and elegance carried almost to extreme. Here was continual protest against a style of all others the most odious, by which Landor in his time had seen havoc made of names that should have had nothing but honor; the style of the swaggering cut-and-slash critic, now gone much out of vogue, but whom I can well remember in a still rampant state when first I was connected with letters, disposing easily of all kinds of reputations, terrifying his readers into thinking him original by merely opening on them sluices of slang, and finding them more and more foolishly eager to wipe his shoes the dirtier and more slipshod he wore them.

"Is it not incredible that a Spaniard should be a critic? And yet in what review or magazine do you find remarks so perfectly just and delicate as those in Vol. II. p. 183? 'I ought, however, to have remembered that there is a set of very able men writing constantly as critics, whose principal fund of humor arises from the *roistering* (I use their own descriptive word), carousing, eating, and drinking spirits, which they take a pleasure to bring out before the public with the same kind of satisfaction as a set of half-drunken noblemen and their parasites at Oxford would feel in showing the world what freedoms they can use with it. Their humorous writing is a kind of *row*. It is unquestionable that much of the "talk" which you find, especially in —, would be impertinent and coarse in refined company: how, then, can it be tolerable when addressed to the public?' The purity and elevation of Blanco place him so utterly above the rabble of magazine men, that there is no chance that these admirable observations will correct them. He will never *rain influence* on this hard clay and crackling stubble. I heartily wish that no gentleman at either of our Universities could take a bachelor's degree before he had been examined in this book. At present one side of a question is thought quite sufficient. Nobody seems to recollect the first words of the wise Epictetus, *πάν τὸ κρήμα δύας ἔχει λαβάς*. If this is questionable, and I think it is, at least let it *be* questioned. Let all be said that can be said for and against what may interest any one, and more especially for and against what may interest a great portion of mankind."

Blanco's occasional errors in criticism belonged to the same character of refinement in his mind; as where he objects to Gil Blas, and thinks that Falstaff should have been made comfortable for the rest of his life. "Yes," says Landor, "if Shakespeare had been a novelist: But Shakespeare was resolved on showing that the levity and even the heartiness of princes is failing to their favorites in the hour of need." And so of the objection to Le Sage's hero that he is a scoundrel. So

he is ; but the scoundrel we laugh at we should no more think of taking for imitation than of taking into our service. "Show me any style in any language so diversified, so easy, so graceful as Le Sage's. He wanted the painter's eye, the poet's invention, fire, and energy ; but life had opened to him all its experiences, and he carries around about him a perpetual carnival, pelting incessantly at everybody, and hurting none."

A large class of sayings in the book, arising out of or reflecting the doubts and misgivings that shook Blanco's mind in his later years, have expression in the next extract made from it :—

"At p. 300 I find this: 'I have heard a man of great talents, and conscientious besides, speak of the immortality of the soul as if virtue were absolutely dependent upon it. But for the happy inconsistency which in such cases corrects the evil tendencies of mischievous abstract principles, I would not give a straw for that man's virtue. Men who check their appetites upon speculation, who lay out their abstinence or moderation (as they think) at a high interest, are most unsafe to deal with: for if, by some mistake or other, they were to believe that there was a cent-per-cent of happiness to be earned by a bold stroke, they would not hesitate a moment to sacrifice one half of mankind to their own private gain. The name of virtue is desecrated by its being given to that truly gross, though perfectly disguised, selfishness.' Was there ever anything, in even the sayings of Bacon, better or more wisely said than this?"

What follows on the Protestant Church Establishment in Ireland may in present circumstances be read with an interest surpassing Landor's :—

"At p. 247 of the second volume we have these remarks on the Church Establishment in Ireland, where Blanco had lived so long with his friend Archbishop Whately: 'I have arrived at the conclusion that, were it not for the Irish Church Establishment, the indirect influence of English civilization would have produced a tacit reformation on Irish Popery. I am indeed fully aware that the Romanist system is incapable of a real reform: for its principle, submission to a priesthood, is essentially wrong and mischievous. But, had it not been for the constant irritation produced on both the priesthood and laity of Catholic Ireland by the political ascendancy enjoyed and asserted by a small minority of Protestants, Irish Popery would by this time be but an empty name for all the efficient intellect of Ireland.' How true is all this page! how worthy of remembrance!"

My old friend here gets upon a favorite theme :—

"It appears to me that you are perfectly right in preferring the idiom to the grammar, for idiom is not founded on grammar, but grammar on idiom. How would some of our fashionable writers stare if they could read Thucydides or Plato! The best authors had no authority before them. Pascal and Madame de Sévigné wrote before there was any French grammar, I believe; Demosthenes and Cicero before there was a Greek or a Latin one. Never in my life did I open, much less read, any of ours. This is among God's mercies to me. Blanco White, whom I continue to read with increasing interest, makes the most just remarks upon our English style, in pp. 386 and 387 of the volumes edited by Thom. How admirably he him-



self writes in what is rapidly to us becoming a dead language, and is to him a foreign one! Honor to the women! I say with him. The French have no better author than Madame de Sévigné; we very few better than Mrs. Inchbald and Mrs. Barbauld. What is taken for the style of Addison is indeed not his style, but his temperament, his graceful mind, his easy humor, and, in the Vision of Mirza, a calm quiet genius borne upward by a warm but not a fiery imagination."

More and more the book delighted him as he read, more and more lucid seemed the depth of Blanco's thought:—

"'It is remarkable' (Vol. II. p. 319) 'that when any man manifests strong convictions, especially if he does not share them with a party, he is said to have strong prejudices,' &c. Admirable the whole of this passage, showing how the world is divided between those who believe steadily by early habit and prejudice, and those who have no steady belief; so that he who has strong individual convictions, obtained by independent inquiry, is attacked by both. What a profound observation is this of Goethe's quoted by Blanco! 'Time is infinitely long, and each day a vessel into which a great deal may be poured if we really desire to fill it' (p. 320). Certainly the man who said this was the wisest man of his time, as he was the most poetical. Drops hang from every work of Goethe's that I have seen of the very purest brightness, such as will never dry up nor fall. I can judge of them by translations only; but I admire much of his poetry and all his prose. — What a tender and beautiful notice (p. 325) of Mrs. Whately and her daughters! What a just remark is this on free institutions in such countries as Spain, Portugal, and Greece! 'Civil liberty is morally useful only inasmuch as it makes individuals respect themselves. When liberty does not produce this effect, it is mere license, its end anarchy, and, through anarchy, slavery. Despotism is then preferable to liberty; for despotism is at all events order. The difficulty of establishing free institutions in Spain, Portugal, Greece, arises from the total absence of any seed of that self-respect which liberty may indeed raise in a rude soul, but which it will never produce in a degraded one' (p. 330). As wisely says Blanco (p. 346) of political profligacy that it is the last sin which men are likely to acknowledge as such, and renounce: and for myself I add, that were I a casuist or a Jesuit, I would start a question whether a man who aspires to be prime minister is a patriot or a scoundrel. He must know that he becomes a liar, if never one before. He must lie both actively and passively; he must commit injustice by giving to the less worthy what he should have given to the more worthy. All this he does, he tells you, for his country. He does not give his life for it, as many Romans did; but he gives his soul, such as it is. Many thoughts crowd upon me here, but neither have I room for them, nor have you patience. Supreme power may be worth the anxieties of ambition; but a lofty mind could never condescend to bargain with the brokers in a house of commons, or endure to sit at a long dinner-table with such a gang of blackguards. Vol. II. p. 19. 'The moral world presents upon the whole a most hideous and distorted appearance. But it happens here, as in some pictures. Looked at with the naked eye, they are a perfect mass of confusion; but the moment you look through a lens constructed to unite the scattered lines in a proper focus, they show regularity and even beauty. My favorite lens is a virtuous man: it brings into harmony the discordant parts of the moral world.' Philosophy and piety were never more beautifully blended than here; and a fine spirit of poetry pervades the whole."

Space is left for only one example more of this loving talk with a silent friend, and it shall be taken from the last of the letters Landor sent me about him :—

“He has just remarks on our architects. In my own opinion every Englishman ought to be restrained, by act of Parliament, from building anything above a pigsty. What has the present age to do with the Elizabethan? Have we so much light that a sixth of every window should be composed of stone and another sixth of lead? And must we, young and old, mount upon stools to look out of them? Architecture should be modified by the climate. We have Whitehall before our eyes, if indeed we have any eyes before Whitehall. Inigo Jones was one of our great glories. The arts will readily place him with Hogarth, Wilson, Wollett, Flaxman (the greatest man of all), and your friends Landseer, Stanfield, and Maclise. I think even Reynolds and Gainsborough may be proud of such companionship. There is, by the way, something in the portraits of Gainsborough which I am disposed to think unrivalled in his time or since. — Blanco in a following page says truly: ‘A quick and deep perception of the *beautiful* is of the utmost importance both for our virtue and our happiness.’ And he adds, that he generally closes his day with Shakespeare. Poor Blanco! poor Blanco! I have now gone along with him through all his perplexities, all his bodily pains and mortal sorrows, and have left him at the gates of heaven. Hope has already thrown them wide for him, the Hope that never trembles. There is more goodness, as there is more knowledge and wisdom, in our days than in any past; but it is diffused among many: we find nowhere much concentrated; there is no man pre-eminent in sanctitude, none a half-head above the rest in genius. Again poor Blanco! If his genius was not indeed of the very highest order, his knowledge, his judgment, his disinterestedness, his many virtues, above all his noble conscientiousness, have left him hardly an equal upon earth.”

Of course Landor read with eager attention the volumes of *Southey's Life and Letters* as they successively appeared; but from his many letters referring to them only a very few extracts can be taken. They show how steady, on the whole, was his poetical faith that there have been four magic poets in the world, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton, and that we are still awaiting the Fifth Monarchy. The difficulty in the case is that this monarchy may already have come, or may come at any time hereafter, without our being aware of it, as in the case of the Jews with the Messiah.

“All yesterday and all this day” (8th January, 1850) “I have been reading Southey's *Life and Letters*. . . . If he had not spoken so favorably of my *Gebir*, I might venture to say that there had been no one, for a couple of centuries, so thoroughly conversant and well informed in poetry, or so candid and impartial. Only Addison, with his gentle eyes, had looked a little way into the glorious scenes of *Paradise*; for which he now lies upon Milton's bosom, the greatest of God's rewards. I have been reading once more Dante's *Paradiso*. There are most beautiful things in it; much better than the best in *Paradise Regained*, and more of them. But never will I concede that he has written so grand a poem as *Paradise Lost*; no, nor any man else. The *Iliad* in comparison is Ida to the Andes. The odes of Pindar to Milton's lyrics, that is, the sonnets, Allegro, Penseroso, &c., are



Epsom race-course to the New Forest. I am not writing on my knees; that duty would be an incommodious one."

*Of himself, as he appears in Southey's Letters.*

"Here I stand, brought to life by a dead man. Few people would ever have known that I had written poetry, if Southey had not given his word that a sort of poetry it really and truly was. I must have waited until Pindar and Æschylus had taken me between them, and until Milton had said, 'Commonwealth's man, we meet at last.' Well, I would rather meet him and Southey hereafter than any of them; though I know he will ask me why I have done so little. My answer will be, Because I wrote chiefly to occupy the vacant hour, caring not a straw for popularity, and little more for fame."

*Of the great Masters of our Language. (March, 1850.)*

"Dear Southey, like Julius Hare, was fond of English hexameters, my abhorrence. As I see that word it makes me shudder; for what could I have written that Southey should believe I felt it for the gentle Spenser? I may have expressed abhorrence for his method, never for himself. Partly the dreariness of allegory, and partly the reduplication of similar sounds in the stanza, made me as incapable of reading a hundred or half-hundred of them consecutively as of reading two hundred ten-syllable couplets. Never in my life could I perform that feat. He (Southey) represents me as thinking we had little poetry which was good for anything before Milton. Not so. *Othello* had agonized my heart before Milton had reached my ear. For the best poetry, as for the best painters and statuary, we must be disciplined. I had read the *Iliad* twice over before I had well studied *Paradise Lost*. Then the hexameter, even Homer's, fell upon my ear as a ring of fine bells after a full organ. There are a few passages in Lucretius, a few in Catullus, and very many in Virgil, which it is delightful to read and repeat; but our heroic measure is fuller and more varied. Not only Milton has shown it, but Shakespeare too, as often as strong passion demanded it. Southey and Wordsworth have caught up the echo from a distance, and repeated the cadence in a feebler voice. It is impossible for me to judge fairly of Shakespeare's satellites. I have not read, and never shall read, a tithe of their dramas, such is my abhorrence of dirty cut-throats and courtly drabs. Ben Jonson I have studied, principally for the purity of his English. Had it not been for him and Shakespeare, our language would have fallen into ruin. Hooker too lent his surpliced shoulder to its support, and Bacon brought some well-squared massy stones towards the edifice those masters were building. Southey also has contributed much to the glorious work."

*Of Southey and Cowper.*

"How could Southey praise such harsh sounds following one another so closely as in Lamb's line, 'calls strangers still'? What an ear-ache they have given me! Southey's heart protected his ear. He always found a little good poetry in much good feeling. I would have given Cowper a hundred pounds for permission to strike out half that number of verses from the *Task*. I hope he and Southey have met in heaven. Two such men have seldom met on earth. Who is worth the least of them? None among the living. I have been reading also lately" (April, 1856) "the *Life of Cowper* for the fourth or fifth time. No author's life ever interested me so deeply. How sublime must have been the devotion of that man who could sacrifice the purest and tenderest love to gratitude! A sacrifice in his case of heart and soul, leaving Venus Urania for morose Saturn. Ah! why did she who loved Cowper ever love again? How could she?"

*Of William Gifford and other Mistakes.*

"I am reading" (July, 1856) "another volume of Southey's Letters. What an invidious knave it shows Gifford to have been, and how much trouble he took to spoil Southey's reviews! This cobbler cut away so much of leather, The shoe would neither fit nor hold together. His tastes were detestable. He ought to have kept his nose eternally over Juvenal's full cess-pool. Cumberland told me that, one morning when he called on his friend Lord Farnborough, at that time untitled but in office, he found Gifford and another hack in the antechamber. They were admitted to the minister, and soon dismissed. He made an apology to Cumberland for detaining him, but said, 'These fellows must be attended to.' In fact they came for their pay, and got it. It disturbs me to find in Southey (Vol. III. p. 300) the word *rewrite*. I had thought it, and *reread*, the spawn infecting a muddier and shallower water. Properly *re* should precede none but words of Latin origin, though there are a few exceptions of some date and authority. Our language is running downhill without a dragchain. Ben Jonson tried to put the pole between *can* and *not*: he was run over. We are now at *daresay*: where next? In the page which I have marked there is an observation on the 'besetting sin' of our government, which has been signally exemplified of late, 'a habit of leaving its foreign agents without instructions, for the sake of shifting off the responsibility.' I am entirely of his opinion also in regard to promotion by merit instead of seniority. It is a fraud. Merit is favor; no challenging it: seniority is ascertainable.

*Of Tennyson's Maud.*

"I am delighted" (August, 1855) "with Tennyson's *Maud*. In this poem how much higher and fresher is his laurel than the clipped and stunted ones of the old gardeners in the same garden! Poetry and philosophy have rarely met so cordially before. I wish he had not written the Wellington ode. He is indeed a true poet. What other could have written this verse, worth many whole volumes: 'the breaking heart that will not break'? Infinite his tenderness, his thought, his imagination, the melody and softness as well as the strength and stateliness of his verse."

*Of Aubrey de Vere's Masque of Proserpine and of the Envy of Poets.*

"Have you the Masque of Proserpine? If not, I will lend you mine" (23d October, 1848). "He has raised her not only up to earth again, but to heaven. It is delightful to find one figure who has escaped the hairdresser and the milliner. . . . I had written thus much last night, and am delighted to find in the *Examiner* this morning that poets or half-poets are imitating me in praising one another. I do not believe there is a grain of sincerity among all I know of the number; but the outside of the filbert looks just as well as if there were no grub within it. The most envious of them does not envy me more than I envy Aubrey de Vere; but Envy with me lowers her shoulder to let a Love mount upon it. These are indeed revolutionary times, when not only old forms of government, but old forms of poetry start up again. I can imagine Milton reading to Proserpine the beautiful *Masque*, and Proserpine saying in her simplicity, 'You have succeeded with me.'"

*Of Scott and Keats, our Prospero and Ariel.*

"I have been reading" (24th March, 1850) "Scott's *Kenilworth*, and think I shall prefer it, on a second reading, either to the *Bride of Lammer-*



moor or my old favorite *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*. It appears to me now to be quite a fine epic. We ought to glory in such men as Scott. The Germans would; and so should we, if hatred of our neighbor were not the religion of authors, and warfare the practice of borderers. Keats is our Ariel of poetry, Scott our Prospero. The one commands, the other captivates: the one controls all the elements, the other tempers and enlivens them. And yet this wonderful creature Keats, who in his felicities of expression comes very often near to Shakespeare, has defects which his admirers do not seem to understand. Wordsworth called his ode to Pan a very pretty piece of paganism when my friend Charles Brown read it to him; but Keats was no more pagan than Wordsworth himself. Between you and me, the style of Keats is extremely far removed from the very boundaries of Greece. I wish some one had been near him when he printed his *Endymion*, to strike out, as ruthlessly as you would have done, all that amidst its opulence is capricious and disorderly. The truth is, and indeed I hardly know an exception to it, it is in Selection that we English are most deficient. We lay our hands upon all, and manage very badly our dependencies. A young poet should be bound apprentice to Pindar for three years, whether his business be the ode or anything else. He will find nothing in the workshop which he expected to find, but quite enough of highly wrought tools and well-seasoned materials."

*Of Sydney and Bobus Smith.*

"Never was I more interested in any book than I am now" (26th of August, 1855) "in reading the *Life of Sydney Smith*. The English language has had few such writers; happily there are flashes of wit flying yet over his grave. Curious that great men should so run in pairs: the two Napiers, the two Smiths, &c. Will they ever talk of the two Landors, myself and Robert? According to what appear to be the laws of nature and of society in regard to authors, I ought especially to hate Bobus and Sydney for beating me out and out: Bobus in Latin poetry, and Sydney in English prose. But Bobus has had no rival in Latin this 1800 years. You seem to place Jeffrey, Horner, Mackintosh, and Brougham more nearly on a level than I should ever do. Of those qualities which they had in common, Sydney had greatly more than all those people put together; and how many more parts, both shining and solid, had his rich mind! Why do we, by the by, drop our good word *parts* for talents? Even talents are dropt for talent. To talk about a 'man of talent' is to talk like a fool."

*Of Sydney on Demosthenes and Plato: old Heresy.*

"Sydney Smith unluckily attributes wit to Demosthenes. Quintilian very justly says, 'Non displicuisse ei jocos, sed definisse.' He takes up the tradition of Plato's *animation*. He is often grandiose, but never animated: deliberately I say *never*. I have read him carefully twice over. What other man has done the same of men now living? He moves wonder far oftener than admiration; and there is all the difference. Wonder is sudden and transient: admiration the reverse. I have pointed out forty or fifty gross faults in his language, and I could have added a dozen more. Demosthenes is *animated*, Milton is *animated*; Plato at best is but emphatical, and not often that. Even in language there are finer things in Bacon, things more imaginative and poetical. He is to Plato what a wrestler is to a rope-dancer, but very few men have a grasp capacious enough to comprehend his muscles. The hand more easily goes round the full rotundity of Plato's."

*A Preferment unsought.*

"In reading" (March, 1855) "the third volume of Lady Blessington's *Life*, I am surprised and confounded at a letter of the Duke of Wellington's. It appears that good Lady Blessington had asked him, as chancellor of Oxford, to nominate my brother Robert as provost of Worcester College. I do not think Robert would have accepted the charge. He was established in his rectory of Birlingham, and might have risen to higher rank with less responsibility."

*Reading De Quincey on Sergeant Hill and Bishop Watson.*

"I am reading his *Essays and Recollections*" (October, 1854). "He does not tell his stories well. How few there are who can carry a story without dropping the best part of it! There is one he tells very badly which has carried my memory back nearly sixty years. It is that (p. 175) about the absent Sergeant Hill, who had managed, as he sat next a lady at dinner, to tuck into his fob, without being in the least degree conscious of it, all the apron she wore except the strings, and was in ludicrous perturbation when she rose and said, 'Mr. Sergeant, I must sue you for a bill of divorce.' I remember it repeated at my father's table by old Counsellor Wheeler, who was present with his wife when it happened. De Quincey is stronger in his essays, and it seems to me he has seldom written better than in his remarks on your Goldsmith. But his account of Watson is rather amusing. Watson was made a hypocrite not by choice but by necessity: not that goddess Necessity whom Horace represents with the *clavi trabales*, but the blander with the *clavi episcopales*. Imagine him to yourself standing before Pitt and asking to be made *archbishop*. This he could do conscientiously; he had said *nolo episcopari*, he never had said *nolo archi-episcopari*. I can bring before my eyes the premier, bolt-upright, with his head steady and stiff upon his crane-like neck, and his hard gray eyes looking down the triangular declivity of his dawn-bright nose; and I can fancy his deep sonorous voice as he wishes my lord bishop a good-day. 'Damn the fellow!' cries the bishop the moment the hall door is shut behind him."

*Of some Novels.*

"I have been" (August, 1856) "cushioning my old head on the pillow of novels. What a delightful book is Bulwer's *Caxtons*! I have done him injustice, for I never thought he could have written such pure Saxon English as may be found here; and Sterne himself, whom he has chosen to imitate as to manner, is hardly better in the way of character. *Esmond*, too, is a novel that has surprised me. Never could I have believed that Thackeray, great as his abilities are, could have written so noble a story as *Esmond*. On your recommendation I have since been reading the whole of *Humphrey Clinker*. It seems to me that I must have read a part of it before. Every letter ends with a *rigmarole*, then much in fashion, and thought to be very graceful. By *rigmarole* I mean such a termination as this: 'It had liked to have kindled the flames of discord in the family of yours always, &c.' A tail always curls round the back of the letter-writer, and sticks to his *sincerely*, &c. How would Cicero and Pliny and Trajan have laughed at this circumbendibus! In the main however you are right about the book. It has abundant humor; and how admirable are such strokes as where the jailer's wife 'wishes there was such another good soul in every jail in England!' But I find it rather wearisome, and stuffed with oddities of language. P. 191. 'I have no doubt but your parents will in a little time bring you into the world.' If the parents did not bring her into



the world (one of them at least), I wonder who did? By the *world* he means society; as Young did in saying of the *God Sleep*, 'He, like the *world*, his ready visit pays,' &c., card-case in hand. 'He lights on lids unsullied by a tear': but I warrant he squeezed one out. P. 175. 'Penetrated the *utmost* recesses': he means the *innermost*. 'Between vanity, methodism, and love': between is only for two, *by* and *twain*. 'Neither seen, heard, nor felt': here again, *neither* applies to two, not more. You see I have been carrying the cross you laid upon my shoulders. I must now run to Dickens for refreshment. He is a never-failing resource; and what an astonishing genius he is!"

*Of the Edinburgh Review on his Hellenics.*

"You know with what feeling I read a review in the *Edinburgh* four years ago, and here is another which makes me proud of being reviewed by such a writer" (April, 1850). "Yet I could not but smile at the imputation of *mannerism*. Whose manner? I resemble none of the ancients, and still less the moderns. My merits, if I have any at all, are variety and simplicity. Cowper is the only modern poet who is so little of a mannerist as I am; and even he has somewhat of it. A little of sweet bile rises up in his stomach from the crudity of his religion. I am obscure; this is too certain; everybody says it. But are Pindar and Æschylus less so? I am unable to guess what proportion of their poetry the best poets have cancelled. Wordsworth and Byron, and most now living, leave no traces of erasure: I wish they had. I have rejected quite as much as I have admitted, and some of it quite as good. Order and proportion always were my objects. My real strength, I believe, lies in the dramatic, and I think I could have composed a drama suitable for the stage, if I had willed it: but intricacy, called plot, undermines the solid structure of well-ordered poetry. There is nothing of it in the *Iliad*, or in Æschylus; once only in Sophocles is there much of it. The Spaniards are known for little else; and they brought over to England these instruments of mental torture in their poetical Armada. Only think that I am suspected of undervaluing Dante! The proportion of bad poetry to good in him is vast indeed; but never was man, excepting Shakespeare alone, so *intensely* a poet. Another objection made to me, not in this, but another review I have been reading of my *Hellenics*, is that allusions may be found in them to modern men and events.\* In ancient poets we find many such allusions, and wish for more.

\* Such allusions, I need hardly remark, were common in his *Imaginary Conversations*, and in former pages I have noticed several. I will here add, for the reader's amusement, another to which my attention was drawn by himself on the occasion of Sir Charles Eastlake (in August, 1852) having carried off his coat from my house in mistake for his own. "On my return from Spain an officer took my great-coat, as our friend Eastlake has done, and left me his. I have mentioned this event in my Æschines and Phocion, together with the address I put on the letter which I wrote to him at Portsmouth." The passage, which is placed in the mouth of Phocion, is worth quoting:—

"Singularity, when it is natural, requires no apology; when affected, it is detestable. Such is that of our young people in bad handwriting. On my expedition to Byzantium, the city decreed that a cloak should be given me worth forty drachmas: and when I was about to return I folded it up carefully, in readiness for any service in which I might be employed hereafter. An officer, studious to imitate my neatness, packed up his in the same manner, not without the hope perhaps that I might remark it; and my servant, or his, on our return, mistook it. I sailed for Athens; he with a detachment for Heraclea; whence he wrote to me that he had sent my cloak, requesting his own by the first conveyance. The name was quite illegible, and the carrier, whoever he was, had pursued his road homeward. I directed it then, as the only safe way, if indeed there was any safe one, to the officer who writes worst at Heraclea."

In Virgil the palace of Cæsar is the palace of Latinus: 'Arboribusque oblecta recessit.' And the most august praise ever conferred on man is conferred here '(quis deus incertum est) habitat deus.' But one thing is quite certain, and you know it well. I shall have as many readers as I desire to have in other times than ours. I shall dine late; but the dining-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select. I neither am, nor ever shall be, popular. Such never was my ambition. Thousands of people, for centuries to come, will look up at the statues of the Duke of York, George III., Canning, Pitt, and others of that description; but in no centuries to come will fifty in any one generation feast their eyes in silent veneration on the marbles from the Parthenon."

*Of the Quarterly on Steele.* (1855.)

"I would rather have written what is here quoted from Steele than all the criticism and philosophy of all the Edinburgh Reviewers. What a good critic he was! I doubt if he has ever been surpassed. Somehow I cannot but connect Steele and Goldsmith, as I do Cowper and Southey. Of all our literary men, they interest me the most. . . . Dear good faulty Steele! The *Quarterly* was not sent to me before nine last night. I would not, I could not, go to bed until I had read it through. My eyes are the weaker for it this morning."

*Of the Dramatists of Elizabeth and James.*

"I have been reading what Lamb and Hazlitt say of these men, and trying vainly, once more, to read steadily some of their writings. I call them *circum-circa* Shakespearians, and find them to be as unlike as possible to Shakespeare. There is crudeness on one side of the fruit, and rottenness or overripeness on the other, in almost every one. A wineglassful of pure water for me, rather than a bucket of turbid: one season of Catullus rather than all the poetry of the Shakespearian age—beside Shakespeare's! Yet there are strong throbs in the breasts that heave in those tarnisht spangles, and there are crevices that let fresh air into those barns and brothels. But Shakespeare! who can speak of him! Antiquity fades away before him, and even Homer is but a shadow."

*After reading some recent Poems.* (1856.)

"We are living in a poetical world where atoms are flying up and down: where explosions are incessant: where bright buttons and unthreaded epaulettes, and laces of pantaloons, and broken limbs in minute particles, are scattered through the air. Granular sparkles in profusion, but nowhere a cubic inch of solid poetry. I venture to say this to you: to others I am a sad dissembler, and put on my sweetest smiles and prettiest behavior."

*Of Sir Cloudesley Shovel.*

"I was reading in the *Old Judge*, the other day, of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, and, while I remember it, I will repeat to you a story, a piece of biography, which only this very morning" (8th December, 1854) "I heard through a Rochester man, whose father was formerly Dean of Bath. There is, it appears, in Rochester cathedral a monument to Sir Cloudesley. Long before his time an old gentleman named Cloudesley was an inhabitant of the city. He was a man of extensive charities, but kept only one servant, an old woman. Early one morning she observed the scavenger (there was but one in the place) tearing up a bundle he had just shovelled out of the dirty, but dry, kennel. Curiosity kept her close by, until in another



minute an infant was discovered fast asleep within it. 'Lord a' mercy!' cried the old maiden. 'What the devil is to be done with the brat?' exclaimed the scavenger. Mr. Cloudesley came down stairs, and saw house-keeper and scavenger in his hall in debate. He ordered the infant to be taken care of, made frequent visits to its nurse, had it schooled for a few years, and then sent it to sea. But the marrow of the story is yet lying in the bone. When the child was to be baptized, he would not be persuaded to let it be called Cloudesley. The scavenger was present: no information about the parentage. 'Odd!' said the old gentleman; 'we must divide it between us. You give Shovel, and I will give Cloudesley.'

*A strange Story.* (1850.)

"This amusing book" (Mr. Halliburton's *Old Judge*) "reminds me of what actually happened in the life of an old acquaintance of mine, Sir Edwin Stanhope, who inherited the Duchess of Norfolk's estate at Home Lacy. He got drunk at Boston when he was a lieutenant, just before the American war. The '*Select Men*' of that puritanical port had him arrested thereon and sentenced to be flogged. Nine years afterwards he had command of a frigate on the same coast. Never was there a more polite man, or one who looked more gentle. He called on the Select Men, formerly his judges, complimented them on the happy termination of hostilities, and himself on becoming a reformed man, entirely through their instrumentality. He could hardly hope that persons of their dignity would condescend to honor him on board his vessel by their company to dinner, and even in that case he should be able to express his gratitude but incompletely. They accepted his invitation. He received them most courteously, he treated them most splendidly, and a day of much enjoyment was passed. As the time approached for their departure, a servant entered the cabin and whispered to the Custos, the leader of the select, that a gentleman above desired urgently to speak to him. As soon as the justice appeared on deck, he was seized, stripped, tied up, and had a dozen lashes from the boatswain. Each of the others were severally summoned and similarly punished. After which they were set ashore, the anchor lifted, and the vessel put under way for England. Stanhope was reprimanded and deprived of his ship as soon as the incident became known, and only by great interest was he permitted to continue in the service. He died an admiral not many years ago. Indeed I think he was an admiral when I first became acquainted with him, in the very beginning of this century. Interest in those days, even more scandalously than in ours, gave extremely young men commands. My cousin Sam Arden commanded a ship, and lost an arm, before he was two-and-twenty."

*Of the Apple of Discord: suggested by reading a Review.*

"I have been reading" (January, 1851) "the notice of Southey; and it brought a reflection into my mind which I shall put into Hare's mouth in a Conversation I am writing. Here it is. 'Envy of pre-eminence is universal and everlasting. Little men, whenever they find an opportunity, follow the steps of greater in this dark declivity. The Apple of Discord was full-grown soon after the Creation. It fell between the two first brothers in the garden of Eden: it fell between two later on the plain of Thebes. Narrow was the interval, when again it gleamed portentously on the short grass of Ida. It rolled into the palace of Pella, dividing Philip and "Philip's god-like son": it followed that insatiable youth to the extremities of his conquests, and even to his sepulchre; then it broke the invincible phalanx and

scattered the captains wide apart. It lay in the gates of Carthage, so that they could not close against the enemy: it lay between the generous and agnate families of Scipio and Gracchus. Marius and Sulla, Julius and Pompeius, Octavius and Antonius, were not the last who experienced its fatal malignity. King imprisoned king, emperor stabbed emperor, pope poisoned pope, contending for God's vicegerency. The roll-call of their names, with a cross against each, is rotting in the lumber-rooms of history.' Perhaps you may think this too grave. Well, then, here is something lighter for you, touching upon the same subject.

Poets hate poets the world over.  
Wisely will Clio's favored lover  
Keep to the woods, nor dream of clover.

Rash, rash, to offer such advice!  
Did ever housewife teach the mice  
To keep from sugar and from rice?

|| 'Tennyson.' True; *him* none can hate,  
Yet all are envious of his state  
And wish he were not quite so great."

*Of Mrs. Barbauld on Collins. (8 July, 1851.)*

"I have lately been reading an edition of Collins, with notes by Mrs. Barbauld. Some of them are just; others are unsatisfactory and even absurd. Of his best poem, his ode to Evening, she says it will 'probably be considered rather as a literary curiosity than as a *successful pattern* of a new mode of versification.' She had forgotten Milton's translation of Horace's ode to Pyrrha. Her remarks on blank verse are miserably feeble. She says, 'we may venture to pronounce it far from probable that the mode in which the great masters of English versification from Pope to Darwin' (she forgets Dryden here, as she had forgotten Milton before) 'wrote, should be discovered to be the offspring of tasteless caprice or the blind compliance with unmeaning custom. Our common blank verse is so extremely easy to compose that it tempts a young author to negligence.' The *negligence* of young authors or old ones offers no argument on either side. Italian rhymes are *extremely easy to compose*, and both young authors and old ones have been negligent about it; but we can read Ariosto and Tasso and Dante. Our Milton in his blank verse is much less negligent than in his rhymed; he has rejected rhyme in his *Lycidas*, as Tasso had done in his *Pastor Fido*; and so far from either of these poems being the less harmonious for the omission, no rhymed poem in any language is half so harmonious as either. Blank verse in some of our later popular poets may be diffuse: so much greater is the merit of those who have screwed up the chords of their instrument. In their high festivals the sweet wine is poured out for the ladies: men sit around the austerer of ancient vintages."

*Of Cobbett's Register, and other Newspapers, in 1808.*

"I have found my three letters to Riguelme,\* who commanded the third division of the Gallician army when I went out to Spain; and I send you the passage from the second of them that you wished to see. It was written from Bilbao on the 22d of September, 1808. 'It surprises me extremely, that so few of our newspapers have been yet translated into your

\* See *ante*, p. 144. The reader will be amused by observing the remark about Livy and recollecting what was said by Mr. Cobden of the *Times* and Thucydides.



language; and that you should require from *me* the sentiments, real or reputed, of individuals high in office. No form of history can draw characters to the life and at full length so perfectly as these newspapers. Even the most stupid among them detail the speeches delivered by the principal members of our Parliament, fairly and impartially. Perhaps in proportion to their deficiency of shrewdness and minuteness, — in proportion as they distrust their ingenuity and aptitude at investigating the origin of events, — they exhibit clearly and broadly our sentiments and feelings. Those which aspire to more literary distinction are usually in the interests of a party; and hence especially you may collect the arguments by which government is defended or assailed. By reading these in the coffee-houses or in their families, and by conversing long after dinner with perfect freedom, Englishmen acquire more general knowledge, more propriety and power of argument, than any other people. It has been asserted that we have no constitution, because it has not been in every part defined. You might as easily hope to persuade a man of landed property that he has no estate, because he has not a map of it. But to confess the truth, as our wealth lies chiefly in public credit, so our constitution rests principally on the national good sense. They tell us we have no representation. But if the king were to impose an arbitrary tax, or to continue one against the reclamations of the people, he would cease to reign. A paper is published by a man named Cobbett, so remarkable for its vigor of style, for its boldness of disquisition and originality of thought, that it may be said in some measure to control the ministry and dictate to the opposition. He favors your cause: and a single man of genius is greater, not only in the eye of God, of reason, and of posterity, but, by controlling and directing the public mind, is actually more potent, than three dozen princes. I wish I could collect, from their earliest date, a series of newspapers. It would be better to possess it than the lost books of Livy. Hopes, fears, and surmises — the growth, the gradations, the vicissitudes of opinion — assume the most interesting forms, the most vivid and natural colors, appear in their proper time, and occupy their proper places. The court is thrown open; the people pass to and fro with all their humors; the courtiers are discovered in their various trimmings; the insects are classed and labelled and pinned to the very leaf. History hopes to confer a greater durability by giving lines and light where nature has given none.’”

*Of Swift's Tale of a Tub.* (1858.)

“I am reading once more” (he was now eighty-three years of age) “the work I have read oftener than any other prose work in our language. I cannot bring to my recollection the number of copies I have given away, chiefly to young Catholic ladies. I really believe I converted one by it unintentionally. What a writer! not the most imaginative or the most simple, not Bacon or Goldsmith, had the power of saying more forcibly or completely whatever he meant to say!”

*Of Shelley and himself.*

“I have been looking” (26th April, 1858) “into the life of Shelley. I could not help smiling at Shelley's praise of me, and at his Hogg's tossing up *Gebir* into the fire.\* Poor Shelley got into a scrape about me with

\* See *ante*, p. 69, and also p. 419, note. It was my intention, when the latter note was written, to have made allusion to the effect produced on Landor by a detailed narrative (I found it among his papers) of all the circumstances of Shelley's first mar-

Byron. Yet, ardent as he was in my favor, I refused his proffered visit. His conduct towards his first wife had made me distrustful of him. Yet, with perhaps the single exception of Burns, he and Keats were inspired with a stronger spirit of poetry than any other poets since Milton. I sometimes fancy that Elizabeth Barrett Browning comes next. But I must confess I turn more frequently to Goldsmith. A very little of what is strange estranges me. I hate new dresses, though they fit close. Never tell me again of any one who either praises or dispraises me. I know what I am. Shelley and Southey know it also. When poets extol a poet, be sure it is not too highly."

*Of Sir Robert Peel's posthumous Memoir. (1853.)*

"I am reading Peel's Memoir. I think him the wisest politician since Walpole. Shall we ever have a third Sir Robert? This second of them knew business better, and had a finer scent, than any other of either pack, foxhound or beagle. He starts the old question, Is fame worth having? No, say I; but we are born with an appetite for it, and at worst there is no great harm in its indulgence. It is certainly well that statesmen should desire it. Many grave men and most politicians think of fame as Castle-reagh did, and aim only at the expedients of the hour. Entertaining no passion for glory, he looked at the future with indifference, and, armed against himself, he leapt across its boundary-line. After all, unless we deem posthumous glory a promise made in earnest to our labors and aspirations, nothing is there true and real beyond the immediate grasp of our fingers. It is impossible that a great man should be contented with the greatness which a less man can confer, or that a prudent one should think the best fortune consists in a life-annuity. Nothing is less selfish than a desire of fame, since its only sure acquisition is by laboring for others. And yet I will still add, for myself, that I care not for it: though the good Southey went so far as to say that literary fame was the only fame of which a wise man ought to be ambitious. Whatever works of imagination I have composed might have perished the next hour without a regret. My pleasure was in the conception and formation: excitement, not hope, interior glory, not external, animated and sustained me. True indeed is what you have often told me, that I shall have to wait long before I get my higher audience, and rule over the See appointed for me. My indifference about it is therefore fortunate for me; and being so, to this effect I give you my benediction, and pray God to have you in his holy keeping,

"WALTER EPISCOPUS."

The remark as to fame there quoted from Southey was one of the points made by the *Quarterly Review* against him in the paper referred to in the last section. It is only half given by Landor, the entire passage standing thus: "Literary fame is the only fame of which a wise man ought to be ambitious, because it is the only lasting and living fame." This the reviewer turned into a declaration by Southey of his belief that literature is "by far the grandest object of human concern," and laughed at him for having expressed such an opinion. Southey did not say so, but gave his reason for thinking

riage, and its disastrous issue, communicated from a source unhappily only too authentic. Later reflection has, however, convinced me that no good can now be done by reviving a subject so inexpressibly painful.



that literary fame was the only fame of which a wise man ought to be ambitious. And is it so, or is it not? What is the fame that the majority of sensible men perceive to be the most durable? Would the reviewer himself have chosen to be Augustus or Horace? Is the fame of Elizabeth or Essex preferable to that of Shakespeare or Bacon? Who now would not rather have been De Foe than the statesman who put him in the pillory? Is it Johnson or Lord Chesterfield who at present stands waiting in the anteroom? Southey's proposition is as surely right and indisputable as the reviewer's construction of it is very far from either. A man who rightly values literary fame does not value it for the empty and noisy applause it reverberates, but for the solid and silent good it represents. The notion that literature is by far the grandest object of human concern, which is the expression of the reviewer, is a very different thing from the belief, which was that of Southey, that the grandest objects of human concern can have no promoter so effectual as literature, nor any monument so enduring. To such a man literature is the means, and not the object or the end. Milton had no thought of personal vanity when he spoke of the perpetuity of praise which God and good men had consented should be the reward of those whose published labors had advanced the good of mankind. Great writers who understand their vocation are entitled to speak as the world's unacknowledged legislators; and even the reviewer has to admit, of Southey, that he gave the first effective impulse to not a few of the most marked ameliorations of recent years.

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On the subject of orthography and language, supremely Landor's favorite, which he kept steadily before him in all his reading, and which entered very largely into almost all his letters in later life, I have not thought it necessary to add many illustrations to the remarks on a former page.\* But some further allusions to it may be not unamusing, and they will show his whimsical resentment when anything like comparison was irreverently made between his and the phonetic style of spelling. Of the latter, Bath was in some sort the head-quarters at this time, its most intelligent advocate residing there; and Hartley Coleridge had this much excuse for a statement he made that Landor had become a convert to "this foolery." But it was about as well founded as Landor's reply that there were not three words in all his proposed new spellings unauthorized in their formation. "I appeal to Ben Jonson. He is a magistrate in language, and I only wish a few of our street-walking ladies and gentlemen were brought before him, and obliged to undergo his sentence." I have already sufficiently shown that this appeal would not have availed my old friend much, and that with all his toil and pains he

\* See *ante*, pp. 351-355.

has gone but a little way towards the correction of anomalies very gravely disconcerting to foreigners as well as to all intelligent Englishmen ; but it was nevertheless this firm belief that in the changes he proposed he was only restoring the legitimate forms of the language, added to his knowledge of English literature, and guided by his unusual mastery of the ancient as well as of many modern tongues, which enabled him, even while arguing for the maintenance of principles and positions the most unstable and untenable, to make sound and important contributions in aid of what he so much desired. The language is indebted to him for suggestions of the greatest value ; and the character of them is intimated more or less in such passages as I am now about to quote from his letters, especially in those having reference to the system of spelling after sound, or of so remodelling orthography that it should follow pronunciation.

#### *Of Grote's History.*

"I am reading " (October, 1852) "*Grote's History*. Wonderful it seems to me that a writer so fresh from the Attic, and particularly so conversant with Thucydides, should stand up to his chin among the green-grocery of Covent Garden ! It would however be ungrateful to collect blemishes of language from an author to whom we are indebted for so much diligence and information, so much learning and wisdom. The days of pure English were over with Southey, bright as they had been with Sterne, Goldsmith, and Mrs. Inchbald. We now break loose and get among 'ambitions' and 'peoples,' and many other such formidable features, repulsive as those which Æneas met on entering the gates of hell. But everybody now is playing with these frightful cobras, and putting them into his bosom. As people do not perceive the loss of freedom until it is utterly gone, neither do they the loss of language : nor would they be persuaded though such a prophet as Milton rose from the dead."

#### *Of Parts of Speech.*

"I have been reading " (1853) "a clever book, *A Month in the Camp before Sebastopol*, and would have given five pounds rather than have discovered in it such a word as *traps*. Surely this word ought to signify only the instruments of ratcatchers, molecatchers, and such like. Alas that we are sunk into the sludge of slang up to the very chin ! I did think that we never could sink lower after we had *discussed* a dinner with the undergraduates. How the gravy flew about ! and do not you sigh over the stains of soup and of lobster-sauce on your velvet waistcoat ? I beg pardon : there is no such habiliment in modern use : *vest* is the name. I still wear *breeches* : no other man alive dares to appear in them : there are inexpressibles, unmentionables, pantaloons, continuations, shorts, and probably several more in the same department of wardrobe. We certainly are in these matters the most vulgar nation upon earth, excepting the Americans, who are our *continuations*. And how poor we must be. We run to borrow a shirt from a Frenchman, calling it a *chemise* ; and the lady we love takes refuge in the same quarter for what lies nearest to her heart, and gives it the same name. Whatever is graceful, and whatever is disgraceful, we borrow from our neighbor ; and keep for ourselves that only which lies between, and comes into ordinary and homely use."



*Of Corruptions of Language.*

"Here is a gentleman at Bath, Mr. Ellis, an excellent and most intelligent man, I hear, who has published a book recommending us to spell phonetically. Elphinstone, seventy or eighty years ago, wrote in this fashion. Imagine my surprise at being told that a work was composed on my principles of spelling. All my principles are merely the adoption of the best spellings of the best writers, and the rejection of the fopperies introduced with Charles the Second. The cavaliers (as fops were called) wished to make the ladies believe that they or their fathers had emigrated to France, and thought it as glorious to be unruly in their language as in their conduct. Cowley and Dryden were courtiers. Pope hated kings, who really were hateful; but he imitated the spelling of ladies, beautiful as his language is; and before he died he had read and ridiculed Middleton, some of whose peculiarities, good and bad, I also have noted. For several years subsequently there were but few innovations. People threw into the lumber-room their old bandy-legged chairs, and would have nothing that was not stuffed with Latin and quilted into stiffness. It was hardly to be expected that dons and doctors would go into a dame's school; but Mrs. Inchbald and Mrs. Barbauld made themselves greater authorities than all Oxford and Cambridge. We have rarely had two better writers of English in the best of times. What I had in view when I began my letter is this. You have the power of a sanitary commissioner, and can command the stopping up of several open sewers in our language. Do order that *paling* to be removed which shuts up *perhaps*, *indeed*, and *too* when *too* means *also*. This has no parallel in any other language; and even those who commit the folly would abstain from it in writing French or Italian or Greek or Latin. The last innovation *every where* and *no where* in two words, as if *where* were a substantive. I find also *every body*: while *body* is inviolate, why should *everybody* be sawed asunder, like St. Bartholomew? I have now *said my say* and filled my sheet; so adieu."

*Of his own proposed Amendments.*

"I have read attentively" (1854) "Mr. Ellis's observations on orthography. Different authors have given different reasons for varieties. Southey told me when he visited me at Clifton, now some twenty years since, that it would ruin him to spell right, for that fifty copies of his book would never sell. Archdeacon Hare, not inferior to Archbishop Whately in purity of style and correctness of thought, had the courage to follow my preterites and participles and other words. In my *Last Fruits off an Old Tree* I have added high authorities; in fact I never have spelt differently from the ladies and gentlemen now flourishing without high authority or strict analogy. Our language was first corrupted by the *euphuists*: it had reached perfection under the compilers of our Church service. It fell prostrate in the slipperiness and filth about Charles II., when every gentleman wisht it to be thought that he had been an exile for his adherence to royalty so long as to have forgotten his mother tongue. Cowley and Dryden, and South himself, were rudely slovenly. The sublime sanctity of Milton was as pure in utterance as in thought; he never was seized by the private influenza, he never went into places where it could be caught. Spenser, Bacon, Raleigh, Algernon Sydney, and De Foe are leaders '*sermone pedestri*'; but they varied in the spelling of several words. The French were no less ambitious of polishing their language than their manners. Montaigne and Charron had been contented with simplicity; Madame de Sévigné and Menage

added grace; but what even these had failed to supply came with Voltaire. François the king was separated, as kings usually are, from François the people; and the people, and children, were taught to write *aimait* and *aimaient*. Mr. Ellis quotes a learned gentleman who reproves his son for *ill orthography*. What is ill orthography but ill right-spelling? He tells us that we no longer use ill as an adjective. The ill is ill-used. Do we not continue to say an ill-turn? and ill-recompensed? and ill-taught? and ill-managed? In the same line he adds, 'nor insert *do*.' Surely we do insert it when we desire to lay stress on what we say. I do love; I do hate. In the next line he objects to *th* as the final letters of the present tense in the third person, where *s* would serve. Generally such a termination should be avoided, but never or very rarely when the next word begins with *s*. I dissent altogether from Mr. Ellis's proposition, that there is no one who would dream of altering a great writer's language. 'Yet we expect to find the spelling of the new book somewhat different from that of the old.' *Rusticus*, and only *Rusticus*, *expectat*. Scholars and sound laborious critics have been careful in collating the editions of both ancient and more recent authors. Aulus Gellius tells us that Virgil wrote differently the same word. He wrote but twenty years after Catullus, yet although they were also of the same province, their spelling was unlike. Virgil never wrote *quoi*, as Catullus did uniformly; and although he wrote vernacularly in the person of a peasant, he wrote *cujum*, not *quorum*. Catullus employed the language of Cicero and Julius Cæsar; Virgil that of Augustus and his court. Fortunately we possess the comedies of Terence and of Plautus, the richest treasures of Latinity. We there see the very handwriting of the Scipios and the Gracchi. I much commend the publisher of Milton's works who observed his orthography. The same had already been done by Tyrwhitt in his Chaucer; and Spenser has been thought as capable of spelling as Dyche. *Paradise Lost* was never indeed seen printed by the author, who had lost his sight before its publication: but there is little doubt that he ordered his daughter to observe the spelling of a few particular words, such as *sovræn*, in which he adopted the Italian type preferably to the French. Mr. Ellis asks, 'Does not common sense revolt against Tillotson's alterations of Bacon to make him more eloquent?' But change of spelling can produce no such effect; and it is laughable to think of Tillotson working such a miracle. Mr. Ellis also speaks of Wordsworth; but, though a poet of the highest claims, it is neither in the same kind nor in the same degree as Chaucer, whose invention, spirit, and variety are equalled by Shakespeare and by Milton only. Some sonnets Wordsworth has written that Milton might have owned, but he could no more have written the *Canterbury Tales* than he could have written *Paradise Lost*, the *Samson Agonistes*, the *Allegro*, the *Penseroso*, the sonnet to Cromwell, or that sublimest of psalms, the Invocation to God on his murdered saints in Piedmont. Is it not perilous, Mr. Ellis asks, to let our spelling change with every generation? Yes indeed. Therefore I would set my foot against these changes as they are rolling on and accumulating. He 'puts it to the mass of writers even among ourselves, whether they would wish to have their own punctuation preserved in their printed works.' I know little about the mass of writers. I can only say that, to my certain knowledge, those who are not the mass have complained to me that theirs was *not* preserved; Southey in particular, and our English Thucydides, the illustrious historian of the Peninsular War: I will add myself; for you know, my dear Forster, that I yielded to you in the preparation of my collected works. In punctuation we differ from all other



nations. We think we are never safe without a sentinel on each side of our *perhaps*, of *too*, of *however*, &c. In fact I think too many stops stop the way, and that every sixth or seventh is uncalled for. I have gone further into these questions than any of my countrymen has gone before; whether in a right direction will be decided in another age. I call upon no one to follow me, but to be obedient to grave authority, and never recalcitrant against strict analogy."

#### XIV. LAST DAYS IN BATH, AND FINAL DEPARTURE FROM ENGLAND.

"I have been out of doors," Landor wrote to me in the autumn of 1856, "not more than twice in fifty-nine days, a few minutes in each. I think I will go and die in Italy, but not in my old home. It is pleasant to see the sun about one's death-bed." It was only a passing wish he thus expressed, but it was destined to have sad fulfilment.

Knowing the condition of health in which he was at the opening of 1857, it was a great shock to me to find that he had been summoned to give evidence in the Bath county court upon a miserable squabble about a governess. The case came on in January, when, in spite of a doctor's certificate of his unfitness to appear, he was brought to the court; and such was the excitement that followed and the exhaustion consequent upon it, that there was for some time reason to apprehend a very grave result. He could hardly have put any part of this affair into a conversation that should pair off with his Epicurus, Ternissa, and Leontion;\* and yet, with all its miserable sequel, it must be said to have had its origin in desires and tastes closely akin to those expressed in that dialogue, where the love of the very old for the society of the very young is made enchanting by all that the Graces can surround it with. Poor Landor had always the belief, that, after the fashion of the ancient philosopher, and with the same sort of charming help, he might be able to adorn and smoothen, for himself also, the declivity of age; and if for the moment, to avoid mention of the names of the ladies who now make brief appearance in his story, I borrow for them the old Greek names, they at least will have no cause to complain. It is not the reality, but the fiction, which such a comparison will place at disadvantage; for, disastrous as the end was here, it does not therefore follow that Epicurus was wrong. Unhappily everything depends in such a case upon the choice of your Ternissa and Leontion.

This was nearly the first year in which we failed to meet on the 30th of January. Landor had found himself able however to write to his brother Henry on that day. Some question as to the burning down of a barn at Llanthony had been referred to him; to which he replied, with even more than his usual unreason as to such things, that neither his cousin Walter Landor of Rugely (co-trustee with

\* See *ante*, p. 429.

Henry of the Llanthony estate since his brother Charles's death) nor the manager of the property, Mr. Edwards, had mentioned the incident to him, knowing well his wish never to hear anything about his estate, and acting upon his repeated instructions that they should tell him nothing. He added that before he left England seventy-two thousand pounds had been sunk on Llanthony, and in the last thirty years three hundred a year on an average, including a small part on Ipsley; and that there was nothing he now so little desired as that any more money should be laid out on any part of it in future. "Three months hence I shall once more purchase a landed property, situated in the parish of Widcombe, and comprising by actual admeasurement eight feet by four, next adjoining the church tower in said parish. No magpie drapery, no lead, no rascals in hatbands, no horses in full feathers' for me. Six old chairmen are sufficient. I thought once of complying with your kind wish that I should lie at Tachbrooke,\* but I am not worth the carriage so far." He alluded then to the illness that had borne down upon him so heavily; mentioned a bequest from Kenyon of a hundred pounds; and grieved that so hearty and genial a man, thirteen years younger than himself, should have died before him. "And now again about dying. Out of my hundred pounds, when I get it, I will reserve ten for my funeral, with strict orders that the sum may not be exceeded; and the gravestone and grave will amount to nearly or quite ten more. As I can live without superfluities, surely I can die without them."

Not long after this letter was written I sent him the legacy, and soon discovered that even as much as ten pounds of it had not been reserved to himself, either for festivity or funeral. The whole of it went as a "new-year's gift" to the youthful Ternissa, by whom one half of it was subsequently transferred, without the knowledge of the original giver, to the less youthful Leontion, for part payment of costs incurred at the trial about the governess; and some differences arising thereon took afterwards a character of bitterness such as never can possibly belong to any but a woman's quarrel. Hardly had the strife broken out when Landor flung himself headlong into it; not by any means, wildly inconsiderate at all times as his conduct was, out of any impulse at the time to be called unworthy. Though the part he took could not at any stage of it be pronounced right, there were many excuses to be suggested for it until he had himself rendered it ignoble. He chose to assume, gratuitously enough, but less so in the particular case than his custom ordinarily was, not merely that he himself had suffered wrong (on which point there was a great deal to have been said, if he had not taken from his friends all power of saying it), but that a very young lady who had claims on his friendly protection had been made the victim of injustice by another lady not so young: and that upon him, in such circumstances, devolved the duty of hurling vengeance at her oppressor. An obligation of which

\* *Ante*, p. 443, note.



he straightway proceeded to discharge himself, after no other than his most ordinary method.

Believing here, as at every quarrel in which he had ever been engaged, that he saw on one side a fiend incarnate and on the other an angel of light, he permitted that astounding credulity to work his irascibility into madness ; and there was then as much good to be got by reasoning with him as by arguing with a storm off Cape Horn. It was vain to point out to him that he had nothing himself to gain from so sordid a dispute ; that what he had lost was gone irrecoverably ; and that there was no such mighty difference between the cause he championed and that which he assailed, to justify or call for interference. Why should I once more repeat what this narrative has told so often ? He rejected every warning, rushed into print, and found himself enmeshed in an action for libel.

On hearing this I proceeded to Bath, and he was extricated for a time ; but I quitted the place with a sorrowful misgiving that the last illness of the old man, while it had left him subject to the same transitory storms of frantic passion, had permanently also weakened him, mentally yet more than bodily ; and that, even when anger was no longer present to overcloud his intellect, there had ceased to be really available to his use such a faculty of discrimination between right and wrong, or such a saving consciousness of evil from good, as is necessary to constitute a responsible human being. He had not now even memory enough to recollect what he was writing from day to day ; and while the power of giving keen and clear expression to every passing mood of bitterness remained to him, his reason had too far deserted him to leave it other than a fatal gift. He could apply no gauge or measure to what he was bent on either doing or saying ; he seemed no longer to have the ability to see anything not palpably before him ; and of the effect of any given thing on his own or another's reputation, he was become wholly powerless to judge. Changes in him there also were which otherwise painfully affected me. He had so long and steadily consented to act on my advice exclusively in the publication of his writings, that here I believed I had still some efficient control. Unhappily it proved to be not so. There had come to be mixed up with the miserable quarrel a question as to a portfolio containing a great many scraps of his poetry, either of very old or of very recent date, in effect little more than the mere sweepings and refuse of his writing-desk ; which he had lent to one of the parties in the squabble for transcription of some portion of its contents, and which he professed to have been unable to get back until he had publicly advertised its unauthorized detention. The whole of this collection of pieces, for the most part entirely unworthy of him, I left him determined to put into print, against my earnest and repeated remonstrance. It was his plan to publish them as dry leaves ; and they became ultimately the book called *Dry Sticks*. He grieved to do anything in the teeth of my

advice, he said ; but, if he did not publish the poems, others would. He had for the time persuaded himself that he had really no other motive ; yet I could not but suspect that another, quite unconsciously to himself, lurked behind ; and that he thought he might thus find excuse for occasional covert allusion to occurrences which the result of my interference had bound him, not indeed by express agreement on my part (as erroneously supposed at the time), but by honorable understanding on his, no longer to notice openly.

I left Bath in the September of 1857, and to the close of that year he never recovered strength. "My weakness," he wrote to me in the middle of October, "is excessive. With extreme difficulty do I weigh myself up from my arm-chair. My good and most intelligent friend, Dr. Watson, is very attentive to me, and says my constitution will bear me through. I doubt whether this is good intelligence. The same spasms, in that case, will come over again some other time, and I wish it were all at an end now." He had nevertheless persisted in his determination to print what I thought so worthless as well as so objectionable, having found a publisher to undertake it in Edinburgh, on my declining to have anything to do with it in London ; he had further availed himself of my continued opposition to withhold any sight of the proofs ; and by the merest accident it came to my knowledge that the publication would be unworthy of him in more senses than one, for that allusion would certainly be made in it to what he should have felt himself bound never to reopen. I wrote upon this to his solicitors, and to a kindly and zealous friend (Captain B——) ; by whom again the case was stated to him, with all that a persistence in his disastrous course would involve ; and from them came an assurance to me shortly afterward that everything wrong would be erased. Never at any previous period of our twenty-two years of uninterrupted intercourse had it occurred to me to doubt him, when once his word had been given ; often as I had seen him put passion before reason, there was yet a nobler part of his character which as often had asserted itself ; and the foreboding calamity which now pressed itself upon me, against all the comforting reassurances I received, arose simply from a feeling it was impossible to resist, that age and illness had conquered him at last, and left him other than the Landor I had known. It was a sorry satisfaction afterwards to feel that nothing had happened to him which had not been foretold, nor anything in the way of warning omitted that could possibly have saved him. But this undoubtedly was the case, and I had only to guard myself then against other consequences. "I bear you no ill-will, Lizzy," says Mr. Bennet in Miss Austen's delightful novel, "for being justified in the warning you gave me. Considering how matters turned out, I think this shows magnanimity." Whether my old friend was ever to have enough of his old self restored to enable him to show this magnanimity, will in due time be seen.



Let the reader meanwhile take this additional evidence of the strange state of Landor's mind at the moment. He persisted for some time in making it a condition with his new publisher, Mr. Nichol of Edinburgh, that his name should appear on the title-page of his book as "*the late W. S. Landor.*" I learn this from the very earnest remonstrance of Mr. Nichol. "I take the liberty," that gentleman wrote (December 17, 1857), "of begging you to allow me to make the title stand thus, *Dry Sticks, Faggoted by W. S. Landor*, and not, as you still continue to write it, *the late W. S. Landor*. It will sufficiently pain many, when, in God's good time, you will be spoken of as *the late*: and I think the expression would jar on the ear of all your friends, as it does on mine." The good publisher carried his point, and it was well that he should; but in the strange suggestion so persistently made, there was, alas, some truth, for much that had constituted the Landor known to his friends had for the present departed. Whether it was destined ever to return, none might say; but it had become, at this time, a thing of the past.

I had greatly desired to visit him in the January of 1858, but the character and tone of his letters dissuaded me; and the book to which I had so strongly objected was at last on the eve of its appearance when he thus wrote: "All this illness is too surely coming over again. What a pity that Death should have made two bites of a cherry! He seems to grin at me for saying so, and to shake in my face as much of a fist as belongs to him. But he knows I never cared a fig for his menaces, and am now quite ready to let him have his way. Alas, alas! as we have talked together for so many years, we shall never talk again. Why cannot this swimming of the head carry me to the grave a little more rapidly? This is the only thing I now desire. I remember faces and places, but their names I totally forget. Verses of the *Odyssea* and *Iliad* run perpetually into my mind, after the better part of a century, and there seems to be no longer room there for anything else." I believe him now indeed to have become, for the mere time at least, impatient for the close, and to have had the sense that it might have been happier for him to have seen it earlier. As he so finely said in his ode to Southey,

"We hurry to the river we must cross,  
And swifter downward every footstep wends;  
Happy who reach it ere they count the loss  
Of half their faculties and half their friends!"

Soon I was told what occasioned me no surprise, that the book just published contained in other forms the objectionable passages on whose erasure I had insisted, as well as all the scrapings and rubbish of his desk; the only shadow of an excuse made for the appearance of such "levities" being a notification at the back of the title-page that "none would have been collected but that a copy of the greater number was without the knowledge or consent of the author procured from a person who had engaged to transcribe them," thereby

rendering necessary such precaution as only publication could afford "against subtraction, or what is worse, addition." It is hardly necessary to add that very shortly, with even less surprise, I learnt that friends of my own in Bath had already heard whispers of another contemplated action for libel. But a graver announcement made to me only a few days later threw everything else into the shade. On the 28th of March one of Landor's nieces wrote to me that she had been called suddenly to her uncle Walter. He had been found insensible on the previous morning, and had continued in that state twenty-four hours. During the four hours previous to her writing he had begun very slightly to rally, but his condition continued to be extremely precarious. During the next week accounts were sent me daily ; skilful physicians, Dr. Watson and Dr. M'Dermott, and his kind good nieces, were in constant attendance ; and few dared to hope against hope in such a case. But the struggle was short though sharp ; the grim visitor was beaten off once more ; and his first letter to me after getting again into his drawing-room was in the old characteristic vein. It told me of books he had been reading, of Shelley's life, and of his old favorite Swift ; and closed thus : " I take it uncivil in Death to invite and then to balk me. It was troublesome to walk back, when I found he would not take me in. I do hope and trust he will never play me the same trick again. We ought both of us to be graver." I had expressed a wish that he would as soon as possible try change of scene, and, by way of bringing round us some old and pleasant memories, had told him of a cottage I proposed to take at Wimbledon. With such quickness he replied, and in such genial temper, that I began to understand what was told me by those around him in his illness, that this last attack, bringing him as it did to the very verge of the grave, had yet seemed in its retreat to have left his mind less clouded than at any time during the two years preceding. I could hardly expect that he would come ; but his refusal, and the kindly bit of doggerel verse sent with it, very pleasantly told me that old simple scenes and enjoyments had been again in his thoughts.

"I nevermore shall have the luck  
To feed again the lonely duck  
Upon the lake of Wimbledon.  
Forster, as jovial and as kind  
As Kenyon, finds me less inclined,  
Now he and health alike are gone.

"Here you see all I can do. Yesterday" (the letter is dated in the middle of June, 1858) "I drove out for the first time, and was less fatigued than I expected. My object was my burial-ground. It has been fixt on, near the church tower at Widcombe. Napier's father lies buried there, he told me. Sixty years ago, in this season, I promised a person I dearly loved it should be there. We were sitting under some old elders, now supplanted by a wall of the churchyard." At the end of the same month I had further proof of how strongly his



thoughts were bent in this direction. He sent me an epitaph he had written for himself.

“ Ut sine censurâ, sine laude inscripta, sepulcro  
Sint patris ac matris nomina sola meo:  
At puro invidiæ, sua gloria rara, poetæ  
Incumbente rosâ laurus obumbret humum.”

“ But then,” he added, “ you see the verses are not fitted for a stone. Nor do I care a straw whether a rose and laurel cover my bones. Sandford will see them run to earth.” He had no consciousness as yet that others were already in hot pursuit of him, with quite other than roses or laurels in their hands ; and that the chase would only end when his bones had been run to earth in an Italian burial-ground.

The blow fell at last so suddenly that I only heard of what had been determined after the resolution was taken. Told by his law advisers that the matter complained of was such that an adverse verdict must be expected, and that the damages would necessarily be heavier because of the breach of an undertaking which they had themselves given in his name upon my interference in the previous year, — a plan at that time started, and only then at my suggestion abandoned, was at the same interview put before Landor, and eagerly assented to. This was, that he should place his property beyond seizure for damages, break up his house in Bath, sell his pictures, and return to Italy. There was no time to lose if such a scheme were to be carried out successfully ; and it was with supreme astonishment I received an intimation, telegraphed at midday from Bath on the 12th of July, 1858, that Landor would be at my house in London that night, accompanied by one of his nieces. Some friends were dining with me, among them Mr. Dickens, who, on the arrival of the old man too fatigued by his journey to be able to join the dinner-table, left the room to see him ; and from another friend, the Rev. Mr. Elwin, who was also one of the party, I received very lately a letter reminding me of what occurred. “ I thought that Landor would talk over with him the unpleasant crisis ; and I shall never forget my amazement when Dickens came back into the room laughing, and said that he found him very jovial, and that his whole conversation was upon the character of Catullus, Tibullus, and other Latin poets.” He crossed to France four days later, on the morning of the 15th of July ; and I never saw him again.

## BOOK EIGHTH.

1858-1864. *Æt.* 83-89.

### LAST SIX YEARS IN ITALY.

I. In his Old Home. — II. At Siena. — III. In Florence. — IV. Five Unpublished Scenes, being the last Imaginary Conversations. — V. The Close.

#### I. IN HIS OLD HOME.

LANDOR went first to Genoa, and there it was his intention to have stayed ; but considerations urged by members of his family prevailed, and he decided to move on to his old home in Fiesole.

Before he left Genoa the advice on which he quitted England had been embodied in legal forms, and he had assigned over to others the property reserved to his use under the trust-deeds of Llanthony. It was his own wish that the assignment should have been made to one of his nieces ; but this was overruled, and everything over which any control had been retained to him passed to the ownership of Arnold Landor, his eldest son.

There are matters as to which I have thus far imposed silence on myself, and intend as much as possible to continue to do so ; but it is quite necessary, at this point of my narrative, that I should briefly state the position in which this deed of transfer left what had been Landor's worldly estate. When he separated from his family in 1835, Llanthony and Ipsley may be said, at a rough calculation, to have been yielding very certainly more than three thousand a year rental, the deductions for mortgages and insurances at that time being a little over fourteen hundred a year, and, of the balance, not more than from six to seven hundred a year being taken by Landor, who left the rest to accumulate for casual expenses, repairs, and as a surplus fund for younger children. Of this six hundred, upon quitting Italy, he left two thirds to Mrs. Landor, at the same time transferring absolutely to his eldest son the villa and farms where the family lived, and of which the farm produce went far towards their expenses of living ; while he took, for his own maintenance in London, only the remaining third. This proved however to be too little, and after a year or two it was raised, out of the surplus at Llanthony, to four hundred a year ; trenching by so much on the reserved fund for younger children. But they had meanwhile profited by legacies from other members of the family ; and upon Arnold's visit to England in 1842, sufficient had been raised to pay the debt to Ablett for



Fiesole, an insurance of equal amount indemnifying Arnold. The result was that when Landor, now on the eve of his return to his old home, executed a further deed of transfer to his son, whereby the latter became entitled to everything arising from Llanthony, the property which had once been entirely his (not a shilling of it having been derived from other sources than those which his mother\* had so vigilantly protected and improved for his use) was wholly and exclusively at the disposal of others. His son Arnold, standing next in the entails of Llanthony and of Ipsley, which he was sure very soon to inherit free from all encumbrance, was meanwhile invested, by the just-executed deed of transfer, with the rights over them up to this time possessed by his father. He had also, by his father's free gift, the absolute ownership of the villa and farms at Fiesole; and, by a legacy from the Landor family, the interest of a thousand pounds. By similar legacies his sister had a hundred a year to her exclusive use, and each of his two younger brothers eighty pounds a year; while his mother, whose four hundred a year, secured in 1835, had been raised to five hundred upon the resettlement in 1842, had this larger annuity secured to her for life on her husband's death by charge on the Llanthony estate. Landor himself was now travelling to Florence with a few pictures, a few books, a small quantity of silver plate, and something short of a hundred and fifty pounds, as the sum of all his earthly possessions. This had been the amount realized in Manchester by the sale of the pictures that did not accompany him.

Before he reached Fiesole a thousand pounds' damages had been awarded against him, and proceedings begun to compel the payment. The deed of transfer, as I well knew, was little likely to stand against resolute and determined efforts to overthrow it. The court of chancery, on application, granted an injunction against receiving the rents until the case should be argued; practically the deed of transfer was defeated; and before Landor died the entire amount of damages and costs had been paid under order of the court. Of course this affected only the sum reserved to Landor's use, and everything else remained as I have stated.

On his way to Italy, and after his arrival, he wrote to me continually; but one subject mainly occupied his letters, and I could give to it but one reply. As to other matters, it became very soon obvious that the only result that was reasonably to have been expected was not far distant, and that his old home could be a home to him no more. "Red mullets compensated Milo for Rome. We have them daily, with ortolans of late, and beccaficos. But these do not indemnify me for Bath, the only city I could ever live in comfortably. I have been in Florence twice only since I came here eleven weeks ago." This, in October, 1858, was the most favorable aspect of things. But before the end of that month he announced to me that

\* *Ante*, pp. 256 and 314.

his health was such as to admit of no chance of his surviving, and that, by means of the small remnant of the pittance he had taken with him, he had so arranged that he should sleep his last sleep in the graveyard of the little church near Bath, where already he had chosen his place of rest.

“WIDCOMBE! few seek with thee their resting-place;  
But I, when I have run my weary race,  
Will throw my bones upon thy churchyard turf;  
Although malignant waves on foreign shore  
Have stranded me, and I shall lift no more  
My hoary head above the hissing surf.”

I was nevertheless not unprepared for what followed in little more than a fortnight, when, in the middle of December, he wrote to me from Florence that he had left Fiesole; that he was somewhat less unhappy; that twice in five weeks, for nearly a quarter of an hour, he had walked out in the sun; and that his principal misery, which indeed he now dwelt upon as the very worst that ever had befallen him, was the continued and inexplicable delay in the publication of his enlarged *Hellenics*. But while in consultation with his relatives in England as to what step for providing him a new home it might be advisable to take, we heard that he was again at Fiesole.

It will not be supposed, after all which has been said in this book of the defects of Landor's character, that my object now is to throw exclusively on others the blame of what occurred during the first ten months after his return to Italy. It is only fair to say that his letters themselves, as may be seen even in the foregoing favorable specimens of them, continued to confirm the impression as to his mental state, made upon me by the incidents described in the last section. That he was irritable, difficult to manage, intemperate of tongue, subject to all kinds of suspicions, fancies, and mistakes; that even when treated most considerately he was often unjust, but, when met by any kind of violence, was apt to be driven wild with rage; that, in a word, choleric as he had always been, he was now become *very old*, — is not, I fear, to be doubted. Knowing all this only too well, I abstain from even a mention of the character of the complaints in his letters; and from all formal expression of opinion, decided as is that which I hold, on the way in which those with whom he was now attempting to live should have discharged the duty they were under every natural and human obligation to render, and from which they could not be released by any amount of mad irritability on his part, or any number of irrational demands upon their patience. The attempt to live at the villa I knew from the first must fail. In itself to the last degree unpromising, the time and the accompaniments of the unhappy trial made it hopeless and impossible. Not however by him, but by those who should have seen that there was at least nothing insane in his desire to have such other provision made as they might easily have arranged for him, was the miserable torture prolonged. Thrice during those ten months he left Fiesole to seek a



lodging in Florence ; thrice he was brought back ; and it was on the fourth occasion, when, in the first week of July, 1859, he had taken refuge "in the hotel on the Arno with eighteen-pence in his pocket," that the gravity of the situation, and the absolute necessity at last of doing what should have been done at first, were put before me by my old friend Mr. Browning, at that time living in Florence.

Was it possible, he asked, that "from Mr. Landor's relatives in England the means of existence could be afforded for him in a lodging at Florence?" To which I had to reply, that, several times during the progress of these dreary months, the same question had been put from England to Mr. Landor's nearer relatives at Fiesole, on whom he had, quite apart from any natural duty, such claims for help by way of money as I have just described ; and that the same answer had invariably come. The trouble had been got rid of by Landor's return to the villa. Now however he would *not* return ; the question had resolved itself into his living upon means to be furnished from England, or the alternative of his not living at all ; and what the old man's fate might have been, during even the brief interval required to determine this, it would be difficult to say, if the zealous aid of the good Mr. Kirkup had failed him, or if he had not found a friend so wise and kind as Mr. Browning. "You will have heard," he wrote to me on the 6th of August, "that I am now in a cottage near Siena, which I owe to Browning, the kind friend who found it for me, whom I had seen only three or four times in my life, yet who made me the voluntary offer of what money I wanted, and who insists on managing my affairs here, and paying for my lodgings and sustenance. Never was such generosity and such solicitude as this incomparable man has shown in my behalf."

Two days after the date of that letter Mr. Browning had heard from myself the result of the application to Landor's brothers. They asked only to know what sum was wanted, and they engaged at once to supply it as long as their brother might live. From this time up to the day of his death, I handed over on their behalf to Mr. Browning two hundred pounds every year by quarterly payments, to which an additional sum of fifty pounds was held always in reserve for special wants arising ; and the money continued to be applied to Landor's use under Mr. Browning's immediate direction, even after the event which plunged so many besides himself into mourning, and occasioned his departure from Italy in 1861. With a few extracts from the letter to myself which will explain these arrangements, and will describe the way in which, to the very last, they were strictly and successfully carried out, I quit this distasteful subject forever.

"I agree absolutely with you," Mr. Browning wrote from Siena on the 13th of August, 1859, "in your appreciation of the character of Landor and its necessities now and for the future in this untoward position, — so absolutely that I shall not go into minute justification of any opinion I may give you about what is to be done, but take for

almost granted that you will understand it: subject to questioning from you, should that not be the case. Your plan is the only proper one for obtaining the end we aim at. Mr. Landor is wholly unfit to be anything but the recipient of the necessary money's worth, rather than the money itself. Fortunately, he professes to have the same conviction, and prefers such an arrangement to any other. He requires a perpetual guardian in the shape of a servant; one to be ever at hand to explain away the irritations and hallucinations as they arise. They come and go, and leave no trace, *treated so*; otherwise the effect is disastrous. . . . I propose to take an apartment as near my own residence in Florence as can be found, and establish him there as comfortably and as economically as possible. I will endeavor to induce my wife's old servant Wilson, who married Ferdinando (Romagnoli) still in our service, to devote herself to the care of our friend. I may say, after our fourteen years' experience of her probity, truthfulness, gentleness, and assiduity, that he can be placed in no better hands; and were he bestowed on a person one whit less trustworthy, I should expect some melancholy result the next day. I can depend on Wilson's acting *for me* in all respects, and not simply complying with his fancies or profiting by his mistaken generousities. I will receive the two hundred pounds in quarterly payments, as you propose; and will transmit to you, at the end of every quarter, a detailed account of Landor's expenses duly examined and certified by Kirkup." This last condition was the only one to which I refused assent; and Landor's niece, to whom it was then proposed to transmit such account, also as strongly objected. I believe that Mr. Browning did nevertheless, against renewed protest, continue to render it to the close.

## II. AT SIENA.

While the arrangements for his future life in Florence were in progress Landor remained quietly at Siena, occupying a pleasant little cottage in a vineyard inhabited only by the contadino, or farming-gardener, and his wife. Subsequently he became the guest of an accomplished American then staying at Siena, who for years has made Italy his home, and has connected his name with Italian art by works not unworthy of its happiest time.

"Landor has to-day," Mr. Browning wrote to me at the close of August, "completed a three weeks' stay with the Storys. They declare most emphatically that a more considerate, gentle, easily satisfied guest never entered their house. They declare his visit has been an unalloyed delight to them; and this, quite as much from his gentlemanliness and simple habits, and evident readiness to be pleased with the least attention, as from his conversation, which would be attractive under any circumstances. An intelligent friend also, on a visit to them, bears witness to the same effect. They perceive indeed, though not affecting themselves, inequalities of temper in him; but they all agree



that he may be managed with the greatest ease by 'civility' alone." Such always was Landor, when he would consent to submit himself to friendly influences.

Again Mr. Browning wrote to me from Siena on the 5th of September. "At present Landor's conduct is faultless. His wants are so moderate, his evenness of temper so remarkable, his gentleness and readiness to be advised so exemplary, that it all seems *too good*; as if some rock must lurk under such smooth water. His thankfulness for the least attention, and anxiety to return it, are almost affecting under all circumstances. He leads a life of the utmost simplicity." From Florence also, to anticipate a very little the days immediately after their return, Mr. Browning wrote to me in the middle of October, being then himself on the eve of going to winter in Rome, that he should be grieved indeed to lose sight for a while of the wonderful old man, whose gentleness and benignity had never been at fault for a moment in their three months' intercourse. They had walked together for more than an hour and a half only two days before. His health had been perfect, his mind apparently at ease. "He writes Latin verses; few English, but a few; and just before we left Siena an imaginary conversation suggested by something one of us had said about the possible reappearance of the body after death. He looks better than ever by the amplitude of a capital beard, most becoming we all judge it." "If," Mrs. Browning at the same time wrote to me, — "if you could only see how well he looks in his curly white beard!"

From his own letters to myself during the stay at Siena I should hardly have dared to judge so favorably, though there were some allowances to be made. His great immediate trouble being removed, he had now again unhappily set his heart on obtaining, through me, some means of making public reply to what had been publicly said of him in England in connection with the trial at Bath; and I had no alternative but to tell him plainly that the thing was quite impossible. He did not take this so well as the condition of mind above described might have led me to anticipate: but the case as affecting him involved, in many particulars, so much real hardship, it was so impossible to speak of what had been to him the original provocation, and all that followed had given to his punishment a proportion so exceeding his offence judged even at its very worst, that any wrong arising out of it incident to myself seemed but a part of a wretched complication not avoidable by either of us. Landor was very shortly to apply to his friend what the reader has seen shrewdly applied by Mr. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* to a friend in similar circumstances; and I was not to have the benefit of the same magnanimity. It is however the more incumbent on me to say, on the eve of our only estrangement in a quarter of a century of friendship, that the impression left with me altogether was exactly what Mr. Browning and Mr. Story depict in the foregoing letters, for that reason here introduced. The drawbacks have been described already. There were always those occasional outbreaks, very unwar-

rantable because generally unjust to others, which in so many instances I have shown to be as little rational as reducible to reason. Indeed I should say, on the whole, that in Landor's affections at their best, just as more rarely in even the finest parts of his books, there was a certain incoherency. But, in several leading qualities, his character was also quite as fine as his books, and the letters quoted do only justice to it. He had a disposition largely generous; an anger easily placable; and an eagerness to return, in quite chivalrous excess, whatever courtesy or attention he received, which was at all times delightful to witness.

The conversation above referred to was not the only one written at Siena. I received another from him at the same date, with earnest appeal that I should endeavor by means of it to get some help for Garibaldi's wounded; and with this he sent me several pieces of writing having the same common drift, to recommend such a settlement of Italian affairs as might leave Venice and Florence independent republics, and King Victor Emanuel protector and president of the Italian states in union. I need hardly add that in this 1859 year the promise had gone suddenly forth, backed by French legions, of a free Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic; and the conclusion to which Landor at once had rushed he expressed in that form.

There appears to have been some difficulty in getting him back to Florence, increased by the effect produced upon him by some new step in the chancery proceedings consequent on the injunction against him recently obtained. He wrote to tell me that the object of all that was going on could be no other than to drive him mad; that the publication of his defence alone could save him; and that until this could be accomplished he must retire into utter solitude. His friends were about to leave Siena, and he should himself go into some cottage or hut at Viarreggio. Alas, what could I reply? I could only wait until a few days' later post brought me word that to the arguments employed to induce his return to Florence he had thought it right to yield. "Nothing," he added in this letter to me, "can exceed Mr. Bröwning's continued kindness. Life would be almost worth keeping for that recollection alone."

### III. IN FLORENCE.

The lodgings found for Landor in Florence, and where he remained until his death, were in a little house under the wall of the city directly back of the Carmine, in a by-street called the Via Nunziatina, not far from that in which the casa Guidi stands: a quarter always liked by the Florentines for its antiquity and picturesqueness, and having higher associations since both for them and for English visitors; to whom a marble slab upon the wall in its last-mentioned street, placed by order of the municipality of Florence, now indicates the house in which a great English poetess made Italy the subject of her latest song.



"He is in a small comfortable apartment," Mr. Browning wrote to me, "newly papered and furnished; a sitting-room, dining-room, bedroom, and book-room communicating with each other, on the first floor. Below are rooms for Mrs. Wilson and a maid-servant. There is a small garden attached. He professes himself quite satisfied with all our attempts to make him comfortable, and seems to like Mrs. Wilson much: but there is some inexplicable fault in his temper, whether natural or acquired, which seems to render him very difficult to manage. He forgets, misconceives, and makes no endeavor to be just, or indeed rational; and this in matters so infinitely petty that there is no providing against them." This letter was written from Rome (9th December, 1859), and only told what, knowing the condition of mind in which Landor still continued, I expected to hear, as soon as the personal influences and restraints should be withdrawn under which he had been living lately. In the same month I also heard from himself (December 21), that for the first time since his return to Italy it had been snowing all night, and that this alone was like England to him. "Bath has no resemblance on earth, and I never have been happy in any other place long together. If ever I see it again, however, it must be from underground or above. I am quite ready and willing to go, and would fain lie in Widcombe churchyard, as I promised one who is no more. It may cost forty pounds altogether. I cannot long survive the disgrace of my incapacity to prove the character of those who persecute me, and this you only can relieve me from. When I think of it, I feel the approach of madness; and so adieu." There was much else in this letter which I do not quote, but to which I found it absolutely necessary so to reply as to put clearly before him, without any kind of doubt, that what he desired could not be done. This led to the suspension of our correspondence. I continued to write to him for some time, but my letters were unanswered; and he did not write to me again until a year before his death.

In June, 1860, Mr. Browning had returned to Florence, and from him, in a letter dated the 15th, I had once more personal report of my old friend. "I find him very well, satisfied on the whole, busy with verse-making, and particularly delighted at the acquisition of three execrable daubs by Domenichino and Gaspar Poussin, most benevolently battered by time. He has a beautiful beard, foam-white and soft. He reads the *Odyssey* in the original with extraordinary ease. When he alludes to that other matter, it is clear that he is, from whatever peculiarity, quite impervious to reasoning or common sense. He cannot in the least understand that he is at all wrong, or injudicious, or unwary, or unfortunate in anything, but in the being prevented by you from doubling and quadrupling the offence. He spent the evening here the night before last. Whatever he may profess, the thing he really loves is a pretty girl to talk nonsense with; and he finds comfort in American visitors, who hold him in proper respect."

To even such a visitor, a young lady who saw him frequently in

this and the following year, we are indebted for one or two additional glimpses of him in his last Florence home.\* Describing the little two-story casa, No. 2671, as half-way down the street, with its bedroom, dining-room, and sitting-room opening into each other, she says that in the latter he was always to be found, in a large arm-chair, surrounded by paintings which he declared he could not live without (all of them very bad for the most part, excepting one genuine small Salvator), his hair snowy white and his beard of patriarchal proportions, his gray eyes still keen and clear, his grand head not unlike Michael Angelo's Moses, and at his feet a pretty little Pomeranian dog called Gaillo, the gift of Mr. William Story. Another likeness the old man's look reminded her of which she was emboldened one day to name to him. "Mr. Landor, you *do* look like a lion." To which the reply came, "You are not the first who has said so. One day when Napier was dining with me, he threw himself back in his chair with a hearty laugh to tell me he had just discovered that I looked like an old lion." "And a great compliment you must have thought it," says the young lady, "for the lion is king of beasts." "Yes," he rejoined, "but only a beast after all."

Of this young lady's recollections generally it must be said that, though the kindest feeling and very delicate perceptions characterize them throughout, there are not many facts in them that were worth recording. They are too truly what they profess to be; "the old man of Florence in 1859, 1860, and 1861; just before the intellectual light began to flicker and go out." His courtly manners, his memory for things of the past, and his humorous quickness in putting odd little sayings into verse, seem most to have impressed her. Reference having been made one morning to Monk Lewis's poem of Alonzo the Brave, he recited it in cadences from beginning to end without the slightest hesitation or the tripping of a word, remarking that he had not even thought of the thing for thirty years. He undertook to teach Latin to his young friend; gave her a great many lessons with much zeal; and entered the room on each appointed day with a bouquet of camellias or roses, the products of his little garden.

Some fruit, too, the old tree had yet to shed. Calling upon him one morning, she found him at work on some dramatic scenes dealing with a time of Greece before history was; introducing, by a somewhat daring stretch of chronology, Homer himself upon a visit to the father of Ulysses; and closing with the poet's death on a topmost peak above the palace overlooking all the kingdom of Ithaca. With an exception hitherto unpublished which I shall presently lay before the reader, these scenes were the last in which Landor's genius showed itself undimmed by age. He had carried out to perfection in them that old Greek simplicity of which I have formerly spoken, and of which in modern writing I really do not know another instance

\* Papers in the *Atlantic Monthly*, entitled "Last Days of Walter Savage Landor." I have already quoted them, *ante*, pp. 105, 106.



so entirely true. It is the simplicity, not of baldness, but of the youth of the world. The king bids his guest to supper while yet the dainties that are to compose it are still themselves enjoying life.

At hand is honey in the honeycomb,  
And melon, and those blushing pouting buds  
That fain would hide them under crisped leaves.  
Soon the blue dove and party-colored hen  
Shall quit the stable-rafter caught at roost,  
And goat shall miss her suckling in the morn;  
Supper will want them ere the day decline.

He orders afterward a bath to be prepared for their guest, and, as he does so, the thought of his lost Ulysses arises to him.

Now leave us, child,  
And bid our good Melampus to prepare  
That brazen bath wherein my rampant boy  
Each morning lay full length, struggling at first,  
Then laughing as he splasht the water up  
Against his mother's face bent over him.  
Is this the Odysseus first at quoit and bar?  
Is this the Odysseus called to counsel kings,  
He whose name sounds beyond our narrow sea?

I may not quote more, but here is enough to throw light on what the writer said to his young lady visitor. "It will be thought audacious, and most so by those who know the least of Homer, to represent him as talking familiarly. He must often have done it, as Milton and Shakespeare did. There is homely talk in the *Odyssey*. Fashion turns round like Fortune. Twenty years hence perhaps, this conversation of Homer and Laertes, in which for the first time Greek domestic manners have been represented by any modern poet, may be recognized and approved. Our sculptors and painters frequently take their subjects from antiquity; are our poets never to pass beyond the mediæval? At our own doors we listen to the affecting song of the shirt; but some few of us, at the end of it, turn back to catch the song of the sirens."

Landor's American friends quitted Florence in the autumn of 1861, but during that spring and summer they had taken frequent drives in its neighborhood, and not forgetful in the least things, the old man, in spite of his years, would always insist upon taking the front seat, and was more active than many a younger man in assisting us in and out of the carriage." During one of their excursions, as they passed on a summer's day along the north side of the Arno, Landor gazed long and sadly at a terrace overlooking the water and forming part of the casa Pelosi, occupied of old by the Blessingtons. The description of another of these drives carries with it a painful interest. "Once we drove up to aerial Fiesole; and never can I forget Landor's manner while in the neighborhood of his former home. It had been proposed that we should turn back when only half-way up the hill. *Ah, go a little farther*, Landor said nervously; *I should like to see my villa*. Of course his wish was our pleasure, and so the drive was continued. Landor sat immovable, with head turned in the direction of

the villa Gherardesca. At first sight of it he gave a sudden start, and genuine tears filled his eyes and coursed down his cheeks. *There is where I lived*, he said, breaking a long silence and pointing to his old estate. Still we mounted the hill, and when at a turn in the road, the villa stood out before us clearly and distinctly, Landor said, *Let us give the horses a rest here!* We stopped, and for several minutes Landor's face was fixed upon the villa. *There now, we can return to Florence, if you like*, he murmured finally with a deep sigh. *I have seen it probably for the last time.* Hardly a word was spoken during the drive home. Landor seemed to be absent-minded." A tragedy lies underneath those few sentences of which every scene had been bitterly acted out, though not a line of it can be written here.

After 1861, the year when Mr. Browning left Italy and in which Landor also lost his American friends, he more rarely quitted the house. But he busied himself still with writing of various kinds. He printed an imaginary dialogue in Italian (whether the purest Tuscan may be doubted) between Savonarola and the prior of Florence, devoting its equally imaginary profits to the help of Garibaldi's wounded; he wrote many occasional verses of no great worth; and, to the same English journal which had published three new Imaginary Conversations by him during the year just passed, the *Athenæum*, he sent over a fourth which appeared in the autumn of 1862. During this time he also brought together some old and new Latin verses which he was very anxious that I should publish. They came to me in the following year with a prefatory note in which his old feeling as to France, more imbibed by recent events, received characteristic expression. "Several of the Latin verses here collected were written fourscore years ago, when the youths of England were set afire by the French Revolution. France is now safely locked up, with her hands tied behind her, and whipped when she hoots too loud for the ears of her keeper."

The speakers in the first conversation printed in the *Athenæum* (in 1861) were Virgil and Horace, on the road to Brundisium; and of the character of both poets, in their generous praise of each other, a pleasing impression is left. The second had for its speakers Macchiavelli and Guicciardini, their subject being Italy. Her unity under a prince of Savoy is predicted, as well as the quarter from which the worst obstruction to it will come. Often had Landor made his young American friend laugh at his comments on the *preti*; as plentiful as fleas, he would say, and an even greater curse, because they were "fleas demoralized"; and in this dialogue there are capital hits much to the same purpose. "Nothing can be hoped for," says Macchiavelli, "where priests and monks swarm in all seasons. Other grubs and insects die down, these never do. Even locusts, after they have consumed the grain and herbage, take flight or are swept away, and leave no living progeny on the ground behind them. The vermin between skin and flesh are ineradicable." "But what," says the



other, "can we do with the religious?" to which, from Macchiavelli, there is a terse reply with a wide application: "*Teach them religion.*" The third and fourth of these Conversations, the latter printed in August, 1862, had in both the same interlocutors, his old favorites Milton and Marvell. The theme of the first was chiefly poetry, and that of the second matters connected with English history or social life; but neither of them added anything to what on both subjects he had said better before. The same remark is indeed to be made of nearly all he now wrote up to the time of his death. It was all very wonderful for a man verging on his ninetieth year; and though it could hardly be expected to have other value, I shall even yet have to make exception for one or two pieces to be published in these final pages for the first time, where, at the very close and on the eve of total darkness, the light about to be extinguished flashes brightly forth once more.

The contents of the volume of *Heroic Idyls* published in 1863 had been brought to London during the same year by Mr. Twisleton, who had carried out to Landor an introduction from Browning, and whose visits to the old man that summer were perhaps nearly his last intellectual pleasure. "He found me," said Landor, "I will not say on my last legs, but really and truly on no legs at all. These last three days I have been extremely ill, totally deaf and almost insensible during two of them, half deaf and just alive the third. But Mr. Twisleton has tolerated my half-deafness, and has nearly cured the other half. How refreshing it is to find a well-bred man anywhere! And what rare good sense Mr. Twisleton adds to good-humor and fine scholarship!" The new book was dedicated to this new friend.

At the same date, and in the midst of these infirmities, it is pleasant to be able to add that Landor was receiving also other personal attentions; as well from his fast ally Mr. Kirkup, as from his younger sons Walter and Charles, the latter of whom especially had become frequent in attendance on him. But it was at this time Colonel Stopford's death occurred, and I can understand him to have been greatly shaken by it; as well for the regard his friend had himself inspired, as for Mrs. Stopford's sake. She was his wife's younger sister, and never, in any part of his life, had her unwearied affection failed him.\* Her letters had been a solace when everything around him was unpropitious; and the last of them, written from under the roof of the mother of the empress of France, who had always been her friend, with whom she had been living during much of the past few years, and who gave her a home after Stopford's death, was among the papers sent by Landor shortly before his own death to me. He had written just before receiving it his lines to the empress.

\* He enjoyed also through life the friendliest regard of another of his wife's relatives, the youngest of her brothers, his godson and called Walter after him, who became a most distinguished engineer officer in India.

Although I neither love nor hate  
 Those whom the vulgar call the great,  
 My heart is raised as bends my knee,  
 Bright lodestar of thy sex, to thee.  
 She whom my Stopford boasts for his  
 Thy girlish smile afar must miss.  
 On high Castilia's breezy plains  
 Loved by thy mother she remains,  
 And makes her at some hours forget  
 Her loss, and find a daughter yet.

Besides the very interesting scenes of Homer and Laertes, the best parts of the volume dedicated to Mr. Twisleton were six other classic dialogues in blank verse, entitled Hippomenes and Atalanta ; Sappho, Alcæus, Anacreon, and Phaon ; Theseus and Hippolyta ; the Trial of Æschylus ; Aurelius and Lucan ; and Damocles and Hiera. It contained also a brief scene, more masterly than any of these but the Laertes and Homer, in which the murder of the fine old Scottish king, the second James, in the Dominican convent of Perth, is not only represented with force and distinctness, but with a quiet power of silent pathos which is deeply tragical.

Anticipating my narrative by but a few months, I have now to add, of the last writings of this wonderful old man, five scenes or dialogues brought to me by Mr. Twisleton from Landor, written at a later date than even any of the above, and printed below exactly as I received them, in accordance with his urgent desire.

#### IV. FIVE UNPUBLISHED SCENES, BEING THE LAST IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.

##### I. PYTHAGORAS AND A PRIEST OF ISIS.

*Pythagoras.* Thou hast inquired of me, and thou hast heard  
 All I could tell thee of our Deities;  
 With patience bear me yet awhile, nor deem me  
 Irreverent, if I ask to know of yours  
 Which are around me on these sacred walls.  
*Priest.* Willingly granted; hesitate no more;  
 Speak.

*Pythagoras.* Yonder is an ape, and there a dog,  
 And there a cat.

*Priest.* Think not we worship these,  
 But, what is holier even than worshipping,  
 Gratitude, mindful through obscuring years,  
 Urgeth us to look up to them.

O guest!  
 Now tell me what indweller of a town  
 But shares his substance, nor unwillingly,  
 With his protectress from invader mouse;  
 What child but fondles her and is carest;  
 What aged dame but sees her likeness there  
 More strikingly than in her dearest child?

Now to another of these images.  
 None are such friends as dogs; they never leave  
 The side of those who only stroke the head  
 Or speak a kindly word to them.

*Pythagoras.* 'Tis true.  
 But may I ask of thee without offence,  
 What good do apes to any, young or old,



*Priest.*

What service render they, what fondness show?  
 Thou smilest; I rejoice to see that smile.  
 I wish all teachers could bear questioning  
 So quietly. Religious men bear least.  
 Pythagoras, they rightly call thee wise,  
 Yet, like thy countrymen, thou knowest not  
 Thy origin and theirs, and all on earth.  
 Some of you think, nor quite absurdly so,  
 That, when the deluge drowned all creatures else,  
 One only woman was there left alive,  
 And she took up two stones and cast behind  
 Her back those two, whence men and women sprang.  
 Scraps of the stones seem clinging to the heart  
 Of that primordial pair.

We priests of Isis  
 Acknowledge duly our progenitor,  
 Whose moral features still remain unchanged  
 In many, through all times.

Did ever ape,  
 As kindred nations have been doing since,  
 Tear limb from limb the brother, grin to see  
 His native bush and his blue babes enwrap  
 In flames about the crib for winding-sheet?  
 There live in other lands, from ours remote,  
 The intolerant and ferocious who insist  
 That all shall worship what themselves indite;  
 We never urge this stiff conformity.  
 Forms ever present are our monitors,  
 Nor need they flesh and blood, nor spill they any.  
 We leave each man his choice, the pictured plank  
 Or hammered block, nor quarrel over ours.

## II.

## ENDYMION AND SELENE.

(*An old discontented love-affair.*)

*Selene.*

Endymion! sleepest thou, with heels upright  
 And listless arms athwart a vacant breast?  
 Endymion! thou art drowsier than thy sheep,  
 And heedest me as now thou heedest them.  
 I come to visit thee, and leave a home  
 Where all is cheerful, and I find a face  
 If not averted, yet almost as bad.

*Endymion.*

Rise; none are here to steal away thy reeds.  
 Thou art immortal; mortal is Endymion,  
 Nor sleeping but through weariness and pain.  
 What pains thee?

*Selene.**Endymion.**Selene.**Endymion.*

Love, the bitterest of pains.  
 Hast thou not mine? ungrateful!

Thine I have,

O how less warm than what a shepherdess  
 Gives to a shepherd!

*Selene.*

Cease thy plaint, rash boy;  
 I give no warmer to the Blest above,  
 Yet even the brightest every day pursues  
 My path, and often listens to my praise,  
 And takes up his own harp and aids the song.  
 Few are the youths whose finger never trilled  
 An early oar or later lyre for me.  
 Haply thou too, Endymion, shalt be sung  
 Afar from Latmos if thou meritest,  
 Nor thy name severed, as 't is here, from mine.  
 Silence is sweeter at the present hour  
 Than voice or pipe, or sleep; so pay my due

Ere Morn come on, for Morn is apt to blush  
When she sees kisses; let her not see ours.

## III.

## THE MARRIAGE OF HELENA AND MENELAOS.

Mounted upon a tall Thessalian steed  
Between two purely white rode Menelaos,  
The sons of Leda were his company.  
On drove they swiftly to where stood, above  
Eurotas, a large mansion, large but low;  
There they dismounted, two of them well known,  
The third was never seen that way before.  
Under the shelter of the house's roof  
Sat with an idle spindle in the hand  
Two seeming equal-aged, and yet was one  
A mother, one her daughter; both sprang up.  
"O Polydeukes!" the fond mother cried  
(He had embraced her first). "O Kastor! come  
Both of you to my bosom; long, how long  
Have ye been absent!"

Helena! no word  
Of welcome to your brethren?"

From the neck  
Of Kastor, whereto she had clung, she turned  
Her eyes a moment on the stranger's face,  
Whispering in Kastor's ear, "Whom bring ye back?  
Mild as he looks he makes me half afraid."  
But Kastor, without answering, ran where stood  
His mother and their guest; to her he said:  
"Here, my sweet mother, we have brought to thee  
The son of Atreus, brother of that king  
Who rules the widest and the richest realm  
In all this land. Our guest is Menelaos."  
Extending her right arm and open hand,  
"Enter," said she, "a humble domicile,  
Which Gods have entered and vouchsafed to bless."  
Whereto with due obeisance he replied:  
"O Leda, where thou art the Gods indeed  
May well have entered, and have left behind  
Their blessing, and to such I bend my brow;  
Thy sons announced the welcome thou hast given."  
"And not one word to me!" said Helena,  
With a low sigh, which Kastor caught and broke,  
Thus chiding her: "Come thou too, unabasht,  
Bid my friend welcome; speak it."

"I must not  
Until our mother tells me," said the maid.  
"Then I *do* tell thee," Leda said; whereon  
Helena raised her head, but timidly,  
And bade him welcome: gazing on his face  
More confidently now by slow degrees  
She questioned him about the world abroad,  
And whether there were rivers bright and cool  
As her Eurotas, on whose stream were swans,  
"Until rude children mockt their hoarser tones,  
And pelted them with egg-shells if they hissed.  
My gentle mother could but ill endure  
To see them angry, stretching out their necks  
Ruffled, as they are never till provoked;  
For she loved swans, the tamest one the most,  
So tame that he would let her hold his beak  
Between her lips and stroke his plumage down:  
This fonder was her favorite long before  
I saw the light, when she was of my age.  
Ah! we have no such now, I wish we had.



There still are birds of red and azure wing,  
 Beautiful to behold; and here are heard  
 Among the willows some who sing all night,  
 Unsociable and shy, and shun the feast  
 Of other birds upon the sunny field.  
 Are any such elsewhere? these you shall hear  
 When sleep hath carried off the weariness  
 Which that proud prancing creature must have caused."

Night came, but slumber came not quite so soon  
 To four faint eyes: the lark was up in air  
 When Helena arose; the mother first  
 Had left her chamber, and the board was spread  
 With fruits and viands ready for the guest.  
 Presently he and his two friends sat down;  
 But Helena was paddling listlessly  
 In the fresh river, with unbraided hair  
 And vesture cast aside; some irksomeness  
 She felt which water could not all remove.  
 The cool and spacious hall she entered soon,  
 Where Menelaos and her brethren sat;  
 The guest was seated at her mother's right,  
 And she was bidden to the left, close by.  
 Often did she look forward, to drive off  
 The flies that buzzed about the stranger's head . . .  
 Flies never were so troublesome before.  
 Complacently saw Leda the device,  
 But Menelaos saw the care alone  
 Of a young maiden hospitably kind.  
 The brothers were impatient of delay  
 Until they both could urge their parent on  
 To give their sister to a man so brave:  
 Such too was Leda's wish when she had learnt  
 How throughout Argos honored and beloved  
 Was Menelaos; she warned Helena  
 More earnestly than ever, more profuse  
 Of sage advice and proverbs from the depth  
 Of ancient lore, how youth runs fast away,  
 And beauty faster; sixteen years had flown  
 Unwaringly, and had she never thought  
 To wed?

"O mother! I am but a child,"  
 Cried she; "do any marry at sixteen?"  
 The mother shook her head and thus pursued:  
 Remember how few moons have risen since  
 A wild Cecropian carried thee from home,  
 And well bethink thee that another time  
 Thy brothers may be absent, in the chase  
 Or far in foreign lands, as now of late."

Helena made excuses, and the more  
 She made the more she wished them overcome;  
 But if her mother and her father Zeus  
 So willed it, 't is her duty she must yield.  
 She ran across the court wherein three steeds  
 Were standing loose; there Polydeukes trimmed  
 His courser's mane, there Kastor drew his palm  
 Down the pink nostril of his dapple-gray,  
 And just beyond them the Thessalian steed  
 Stamp'd at neglect, for Menelaos lay  
 Sleepless past sunrise, which was not his wont.  
 Incontinent the brothers raised their heads  
 And shouted,

"Here, thou sluggard! here before  
 Our busy sister come to pat the necks  
 Or throw arm round them."

Scarcely were these words  
 Spoken ere Menelaos was at hand.

Helena, who had watcht him thus advance,  
 Drew back as one surprised, and seemed intent  
 To turn away, but Polydeukes sprang  
 And caught her arm and drew her, struggling ill,  
 To where his brother with their comrade stood.  
 At first she would have turned her face aside,  
 But could not: Menelaos gently toucht  
 Her shrinking arm; little it shrank, nor long.  
 Then he entreated her to hear the words  
 Of true and ardent love, for such was his  
 He swore; she shook her head, with brow abased.  
 "What ardent love can mean I never heard;  
 My brothers, if they knew it, never told me,"  
 Said she, and lookt amazed into his face.  
 "Simplicity and innocence!" exclaimed  
 The wondering Argive. "What a prudent wife  
 Will *she* be, when I win her, as I hope,  
 Diffident as she is nor prone to trust;  
 Yet hope I, daughter though she be of Zeus,  
 And I but younger brother of a king."  
 Day after day he grew in confidence,  
 And gave her all he gained in it and more.  
 Hymen was soon invoked, nor was averse;  
 Eros had long been ready, the light-winged,  
 And laught at his slow step who marcht behind.  
 Chanted were hymns to either Deity  
 By boys and maidens, though they understood  
 No word they sang: serious was Hymen's face  
 When Eros laught up into it and twicht  
 The saffron robe, and heeded no reproof.  
 'T is said they sometimes since have disagreed  
 More seriously: but let not me report  
 The dissidence and discord of the Gods.

## IV.

## AN OLD MAN AND A CHILD.

A child pickt up a pebble, of the least  
 Among a myriad on a flat sea-shore;  
 And tost it back again.  
 "What hast thou done?"

Said mildly an old man.  
 "Nothing at all,"  
 Replied the child; "it only was a pebble,  
 And not worth carrying home, or looking at,  
 Or wetting, though I did it, with my tongue:  
 Though it was smooth, it was not large enough  
 To copy on when I begin to write,  
 Nor proper in the winter to strike fire from,  
 Or puss to pat and roll along the floor."

Then said the elder:  
 "Thoughtful child art thou,  
 And mightest have learnt from it some years hence  
 What prouder wise ones never have attained.  
 The wisest know not yet how many suns  
 Have bleacht that stone, how many waves have rolled  
 Above it when upon its mountain's breast;  
 How once it was no stone nor hard, but lapt  
 Amid the tender herbage of the field."

The child stared up, frightened: then ran away.  
 Before she had run far she turned her face  
 To look at that strange man.

"He seemed so calm,  
 He may not be quite mad nor mischievous.  
 I shall not mind him much another time;  
 But, O, what random stories old men tell!"



## V.

## ANDREW MARVELL AND HENRY MARTEN.

*Marvell.* Glad to see thee once more, my good Harry! how art thou?

*Marten.* You see *how* I am by seeing *where* I am. Prisons are but indifferent conservatories of health. Cold air penetrates the closest of them, and friendship is the only matter it shuts out. But here you are, Andrew, to disprove my saying. God knows how grateful I feel for this visit.

*Marvell.* The breezes from the Welsh mountains, and from the estuary under the castle, have kept the color fresh on thy cheek.

*Marten.* When I mount upon the table I can catch them as they pass, yet I would willingly barter the best of them against the smoke of London and the fogs of the Thames. Oliver's pen across my muzzle would not mightily discompose me on a like occasion.

*Marvell.* Never sigh, my man!

*Marten.* Pleasure hath her sighs, though shorter than those of sorrow, and you bring them out with you.

*Marvell.* Even here there may be occasionally a glimpse of happiness. When we enjoy it we wish for more, never quite contented. If we kiss a fair maiden on one cheek, we press for the other. We change our mantles when they have lost their gloss. Even in the solitude of this royal enclosure thou enjoyest a privilege granted to few outside.

*Marten.* What may it be?

*Marvell.* Memory, justly proud. Hast thou not sat convivially with Oliver Cromwell? Hast thou not conversed familiarly with the only man greater than he, John Milton? One was ambitious of perishable power, the other of imperishable glory; both have attained their aim. Believe me, it is somewhat to have lived in fellowship with the truly great, and to have eschewed the falsely.

*Marten.* A prodigiously great one, in a black apron and white lawn sleeves, puffy and fresh and fragrant from his milliner, came some time ago to instruct me in my duty and to convert me into righteousness. He was announced by the governor as *my Lord*. I recollected one only whom I ever called so. I bowed however, and sat down, after he had done the like.

*Marvell.* These gentry usually set their day-laborers at the work of edification. My Lord himself, I hope, got nothing out of you worth carrying to court.

*Marten.* He looked on the table and saw there a book I had received the day before, and was reading; it was *Hudibras*. That is all he saw, and all he got out of me.

*Marvell.* I perceive, by thy smile, that humor is not yet parched up in thee, my pleasant Hal!

*Marten.* There are strokes of the wand that can open fresh springs in the barren rock. I can enjoy fun in a poet, although I am none myself, and the better perhaps for that reason. Are there any of our other poets yet living?

*Marvell.* Plenty, plenty; but they ride without girths to their nags, and often roll off the saddle. Waller, the smoothest and most graceful of them, is growing old at Beaconsfield. Even the courtiers jeer at his versatility. Dryden is living. He bears no hatred to Milton, though he would have rhymed *Paradise Lost*! Butler was less mischievous. Cowley has written one unaffected piece, an Anacreontic on his imaginary mistresses. Good fellow! he died suddenly; drunk after dinner with Bishop Sprat of Rochester, he was found dead in a wet ditch.

*Marten.* Poor Abraham! He was my chokepear. They called him metaphysical: does metaphysical mean fantastical? What people feel, they surely can speak out, and not run into dark corners to be looked for.

*Marvell.* Ostriches hide their heads under their wings in the sands of the desert, and are followed for their plumage. But you are right, Harry. A poet loses nothing by being clear and bright, provided his readers are not dull or cloudy. There is a prodigious quantity of thought in Butler, and its brightness makes the inconsiderate doubt its depth.

*Marten.* Butler, I hear, is a great favorite with the king, who has paid four groats for the poem, but never one to the poet; poor as Job, they tell me, or as Milton. Yet Milton, at least, is free.

*Marvell.* He is free from all sores but an inconstant and incurable wife. Solitary in his city garden, if there be any flower he stoops for it in vain; he has no eyes to find it. I visit him now and then; but they who most want comfort most avoid society.

## V. THE CLOSE.

Implored so long in vain, at last is come  
The hour that leads me to a peaceful home.

These lines, with others that spoke of the burden of life, and its heaviness at last even when we have only years to carry, were in a letter from Landor brought to me by Mr. Twisleton at the close of 1863. During the decline of that year he is described by those living in Italy to have become but the wreck of himself; and yet the pieces which have just been given were its product. Exceptional indeed, and very wonderful, such a lot, — to be carrying the weight of ninety years with so little loss of intellectual power, after so much self-achieved greatness and self-inflicted misery. A friend in writing to him at this date very aptly compared him to one of the "Jötuns" of his early poem of *Gunlaug*,\* in a note to which it is said that in the North at all times had existed men of enormous stature; that we ourselves had seen them, our fathers had seen them, and our children (perhaps) might see them; but that ordinary people were apt to fear these higher sort of men, and would lie in ambush for them, and would persecute them; until at last mothers came again to produce children only or nearly of the common size; and yet, for all that, one of the old stock would occasionally reappear. "To change your words," the letter went on, "to add to, or omit them, is of course to wrong you and one's self; but I remember, as I now think of what you have been and are, thus much of a passage *you* may long ago have forgotten. There will be plenty however to learn it, and many an utterance of yours, in days when we shall both of us be elsewhere lodged and otherwise employed. I hope you take the due comfort out of your wonderful amount of achievement, and keep up the old heroic heart *usque ad finem, post finem*! And so, all happiness to you from God, and all honor from men."

Without comment, and requesting only that the reader will considerately forgive some expressions retained in them favorable to myself which I could not wholly erase, I now print, exactly as they came, Landor's last letters. They carry my narrative very nearly to its close, relating what it would be difficult otherwise to express, yet hardly desirable to omit altogether; and here, at the end of life, as invariably at its beginning, they were signed simply "Walter" Landor.

14TH DECEMBER, 1863.

"Well do I know the friendship you had for me, and have grieved over its interruption. I would not now write but for the promise you once held out to me that you might consent to be my biographer. Last week I received a most insolent letter from a Mr. —, containing a note from a person connected with him informing me that he was writing my life. He gave me a specimen, full of abuse and falsehood. This I communicated to

\* See *ante*, pp. 111-113.



my excellent friend Mr. Twisleton. If you still retain a thought of becoming my biographer, I hope you will protect me from this injustice. How often have I known you vindicate from unmerited aspersions honest literary men! Unhappily no friend has been found hitherto who takes any such interest in

WALTER LANDOR."

4TH JANUARY, 1864 (with order for copies of the *Heroic Idyls*).

"MY DEAR FORSTER: I write instantly on receiving your generous and manly letter. Severe sciatica has deprived me both of locomotion and of sleep, but not of gratitude. I have been able to write what I am now writing with great difficulty. Were it possible, I would answer at the same time Browning's ever-kind letter. Will you send this to him, which says all I could say. Excessive pain at every movement withholds me from it. May both of you enjoy as many happy new-years as I have endured of unhappy ones, and may you ever believe that no man is more affectionately yours than

WALTER LANDOR."

2D FEBRUARY, 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER: Your kind letter has almost made me well again. It will be with renewed pleasure that I receive your book. Browning will give you the address of his correspondent in Florence, through whom I may receive it. Many are the kind letters on my *last* birthday, for *last* it must be,—but yours the kindest. So, good by, with every blessing from your grateful

WALTER LANDOR."

18TH FEBRUARY, 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER: It is to you I write the last letter that perhaps I may ever write to any one. Several days I have been confined to my bed by a sciatica, and could neither write nor read. I hope I may live long enough to read your *Life of Eliot*. Our friend Browning has my address. He lives where you know in London. My head and eyes are confused so that I cannot find his letter, which I laid by. He has a banker here whose name I sent for Mrs. —" [he means Mrs. Wilson] "to tell me, which she did one moment ago, and I have now forgotten. But not, nor ever shall, your unwearied kindness to

W. LANDOR."

22D FEBRUARY, 1864.

"DEAR FORSTER: Tear off the opposite page, and send it to Dickens. I am anxious to read the book you so kindly promise me. Your bookseller will have a correspondent here by whom it can come. Ever affectionately yours,

W. LANDOR."

21ST MARCH, 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER: Your book reached me yesterday and kept me awake. To-day comes your kind letter. While I have any of my senses about my head I will attempt to write of both. \* \* \* \* \* There has long been a sickly season in all countries for the growth of men to greatness. How few have been bred in England that could compare with Eliot and Pym! Alas, I cannot write more. Adieu then, and believe me ever your affectionate

W. LANDOR."

4TH MAY, 1864.

"DEAR FORSTER: My kind friend Mr. Twisleton will convey to you some papers and a small bundle of letters, the last I received. They show that I have yet friends, and am grateful ever as your old friend, W. LANDOR."

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9TH MAY, 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER: This is the last letter I shall ever write to anybody. My kind friend Mr. Twisleton will carry it, with my others last received, to England with him. My love to noble Dickens, with, to yourself, your ever affectionate W. LANDOR'S."

"I have been utterly deaf and almost dumb these last five weeks. I am grateful for your promise that you will give to the world the last things the old man has done."

---

9TH SEPTEMBER, 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER: Nothing could give me greater pleasure than the letter I receive from you to-day. I lost my senses for five days and nights in consequence of a verdict obliging me to pay so vast a sum for exposing . . . I must leave off. My head is splitting. You will print what I sent you. Ever affectionately yours, W. LANDOR."

Shortly before the letters were written immediately preceding this last, which brings the end very near to us, an incident is said to have occurred, which, upon the relation of a friend in Florence, the American lady describes in her recollections. On the night before the 1st of May, Landor became very restless, as during the year had happened frequently, and at about 2 o'clock in the morning he rang for Mrs. Wilson, and insisted on having his room lighted, and its windows thrown open. He then asked for pen, ink, and paper, and the date of the day. Being told that it was the dawn of the 1st of May, he wrote a few lines of verse, and, leaning back, said, "I shall never write again. Put out the lights and draw the curtains." The paper on which he had written was not afterwards found, and his house-keeper supposed it was destroyed by him. She described him, during what remained of life, as gradually more and more indifferent to outward things; for the most part reading, or at all events with a book in his hand; physically not deafer, but so much more heedless of external impressions that she had to write down every question she asked him; and, hardly any one crossing his threshold but his two younger sons.

"I did not give up visiting him," Mr. Kirkup says in a letter to me: "but, as he had complained of the fatigue of talking to me, who am deaf, I went just enough to show that I did not take offence, and I made my visits short ones. Another cause of my keeping away was that he had reconciled himself to two of his sons, who were always there, and he felt uneasy at my seeing them after all that had formerly passed with me and Mr. Browning. The last time I saw



him was in a chair drawn by Carlino, who stopped to speak to me ; but his father hardly noticed me. Since that I have kept away, but was glad to hear that the young men continued to live with him and to sleep at his house. Carlino had told me that he went every evening to put him to bed, and afterwards that they both slept there because their father was afraid of their returning at night to the villa on account of brigands." Landor himself confirmed this account in one of his last letters to another friend. "Kirkup comes often to visit me. I can hardly wish it. We are both as deaf as posts, and it brings me the bronchitis to speak audibly."

One more incident remains to be mentioned, which in writing to me some time later Mr. Kirkup referred to. "Young Algernon Swinburne, whose mother I knew thirty years ago, came out from England for no other purpose than to see Landor, without knowing him, a few weeks before his death. He afterwards dedicated to him, in Greek, his beautiful tragedy of *Atalanta in Calydon*. Landor was much gratified by his enthusiasm, and brought him to me." The visit happily was made not quite so late, or it could hardly have yielded the gratification it gave. The young poet's announcement of his arrival in Florence was among the letters sent me by Landor in May. He had indeed, he wrote to him, travelled as far as Italy with the sole object and desire of seeing him. He carried to him a letter from an old friend ;\* from many others of his countrymen, who might never hope to see him, he was the bearer of infinite homage and thankfulness ; and for himself he had the eager wish to lay at his feet, what he could never hope to put into adequate words, profound gratitude and life-long reverence. It was but natural that all this should give pleasure to the old man, in the sense of fame it brought so closely home to him ; and with it may also have come some foretaste of a higher pleasure and happier fame awaiting him in the future.

In the present there was little more left to him. His last note to me was dated on the 8th of September, and on the 17th he had ceased to live. He had so weakened himself by abstaining from food during three preceding days, that a fit of coughing killed him. There was no other suffering. It was a *buona morte*, said the Italian who was present ; as brief as it was unexpected and sudden. He was laid in the English burying-ground, and a stone placed over the grave. On this had been cut correctly his name, and the dates of his birth and death ; but the Florentine stone-cutter's English was imperfect, and the word "wife," which should have appeared in the "last sad tribute" of the rest of the inscription, had taken the quite unintelligible form of "coife." But as there was no conscious irony in this, so neither was there much inappropriateness ; and Landor was not to pass away without a worthier written epitaph. It came from the young poet who visited him so lately, and needs only to be pref-

\* See *ante*, p. 470.

aced by the remark that the convention by which Florence became the capital of Italy had been signed two days before Landor died.

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IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

Back to the flower-town, side by side,  
The bright months bring  
Newborn the bridegroom and the bride,  
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,  
Filled full of sun;  
All things come back to her, being free;  
All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot  
Flowers that were dead  
Live, and old suns revive; but not  
That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea,  
Far north, I hear  
One face shall never turn to me  
As once this year:

Shall never smile and turn and rest  
On mine as there,  
Nor one most sacred hand be prest  
Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,  
Half run before;  
The youngest to the oldest singer  
That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find  
Till all grief end,

In holiest age our mightiest mind,  
Father and friend.

But thou, if anything endure,  
If hope there be,  
O spirit that man's life left pure,  
Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were  
Look earthward now;  
Let dreams revive the reverend hair,  
The imperial brow;

Come back in sleep, for in the life  
Where thou art not  
We find none like thee. Time and strife  
And the world's lot

Move thee no more; but love at least  
And reverent heart  
May move thee, royal and released  
Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust  
Receive and keep,  
Keep safe his dedicated dust,  
His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far,  
Mix with thy name  
As morning-star with evening-star  
His faultless fame.

---

The only perfect poet is he who makes no man perfect. Landor's fame very surely awaits him, but it will not in any sense be faultless. To the end we see him as it were unconquerable. He keeps an unquailing aspect to the very close, has yielded nothing in the duel he has been fighting so long single-handed with the world, and dies at last with harness on his back. But he is only unvanquished; he is not the victor. Victorious he cannot at any time be said to have shown himself; either over the circumstances from which he suffered, or the genius by which he achieved, so much. Greatness there was always; a something of the heroic element which lifted him, in nearly all that he said and very much that he did, considerably above ordinary stature; but never to be admitted or described without important drawbacks. What was wanting most, in his books and his life alike, was the submission to some kind of law. To this effect a remark was made at the opening of this biography, which has had confirmation in almost every page of it written since. But, though he would not accept those rules of obedience without which no man can wisely gov-



ern either himself or others ; and though he lived far beyond the allotted term of life without discovering what was true in the profound old saying, that all the world is wiser than any man in the world ; his genius, which the possession of such additional knowledge would have rendered more complete, was yet in itself so commanding and consummate as to bring into play the nobler part of his character only ; and by this his influence will remain over others, while for all that was less noble he will himself have paid the penalty. I am not going now to preach any homily over my old friend. Whatever there was to say has been said already with as much completeness as I found to be open to me. Attempt has been honestly made in this book to estimate with fairness and candor Landor's several writings, as each of them successively appeared ; and judgment has been passed, with an equal desire to be only just, on all the qualities of his temperament which affected necessarily not his own life only. But, now that the story is told, no one will have difficulty in striking the balance between its good and ill ; and what was really imperishable in Landor's genius will not be treasured less, or less understood, for the more perfect knowledge of his character.

What indeed was highest in him receives vivid illustration from that which limited and controlled it. If he had measured everything less by his own unaided impressions, if he had consented at times to judge himself by others instead of always judging others by himself, the originality that distinguishes all his books might have been less intensely marked. It is a great power, as solitude itself is, if a man chooses to risk the danger attending it. To refuse also to recognize any strength but in one's self, to exalt continually one's individual prowess, and to rest all claim to magnanimity and honor on self-assertion rather than self-denial, cannot but be a grave fault in the conduct of life in modern time ; but shift it back into classic ages, and the heroes of Greece and Rome take visible shape once more. Yet was this only a part of Landor's happiest achievement, which was not so circumscribed within Paganism as the general character of his genius and method has led many to suppose. The source from which he drew his inspiration had not so confined him in applying it. Though his mind was cast in the antique mould, it had opened itself to every kind of impression through a long and varied life ; he has written with equal excellence in both poetry and prose, which can hardly be said of any of his contemporaries ; and perhaps the single epithet by which his books would be best described is that reserved exclusively for books not characterized only by genius, but also by special individuality. They are unique. Having possessed them, we should miss them. Their place would be supplied by no others. They have that about them, moreover, which renders it almost certain that they will frequently be resorted to in future time. There are none in the language more quotable. Even where impulsiveness and want of patience have left them most fragmentary, this rich compensation is

offered to the reader. There is hardly a conceivable subject, in life or literature, which they do not illustrate by striking aphorisms, by concise and profound observations, by wisdom ever applicable to the needs of men, and by wit as available for their enjoyment. Nor, above all, will there anywhere be found a more pervading passion for liberty, a fiercer hatred of the base, a wider sympathy with the wronged and the oppressed, or help more ready at all times for those who fight at odds and disadvantage against the powerful and the fortunate, than in the writings of WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.



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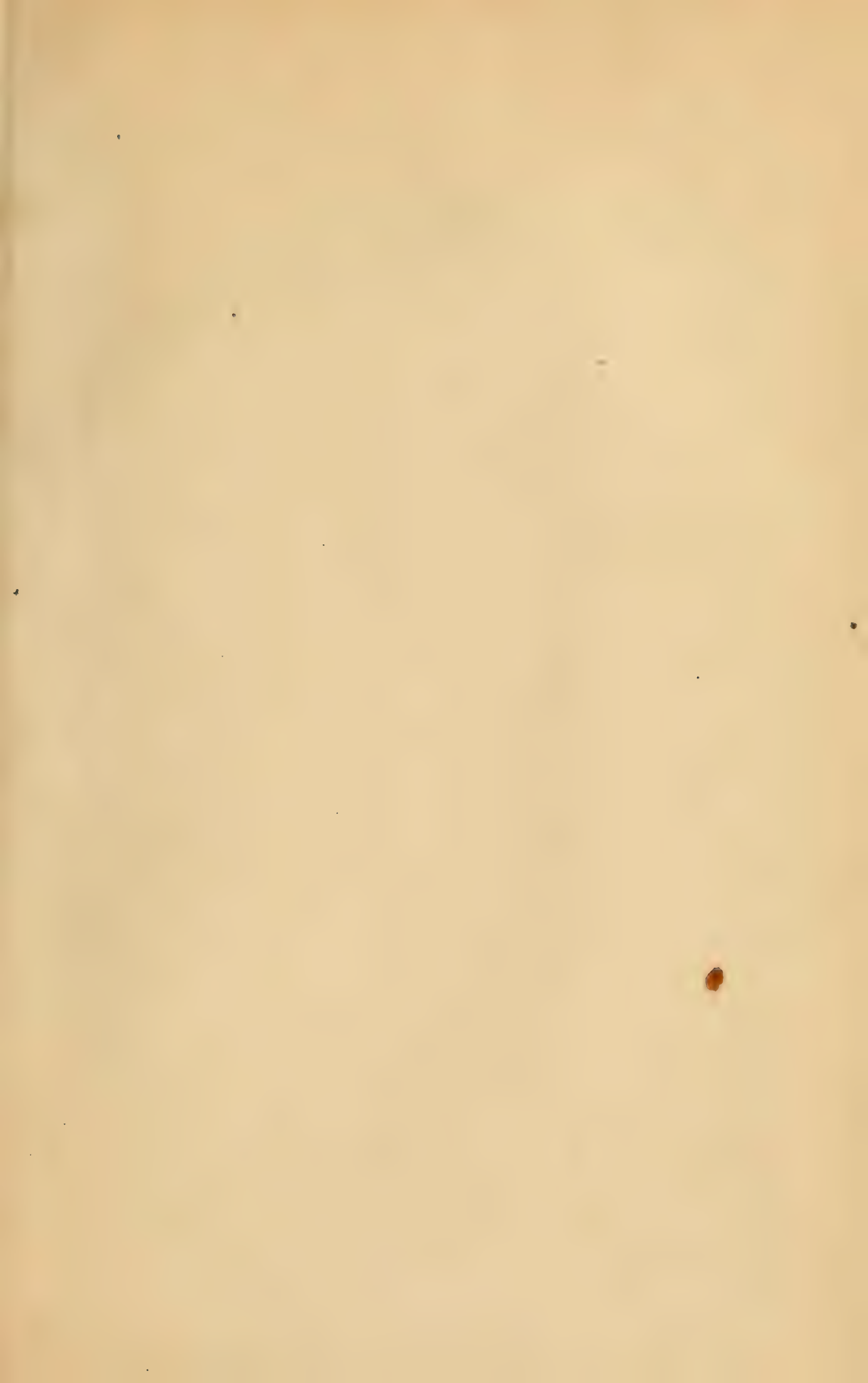






















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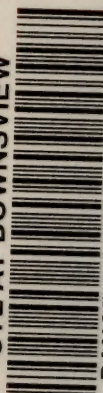
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